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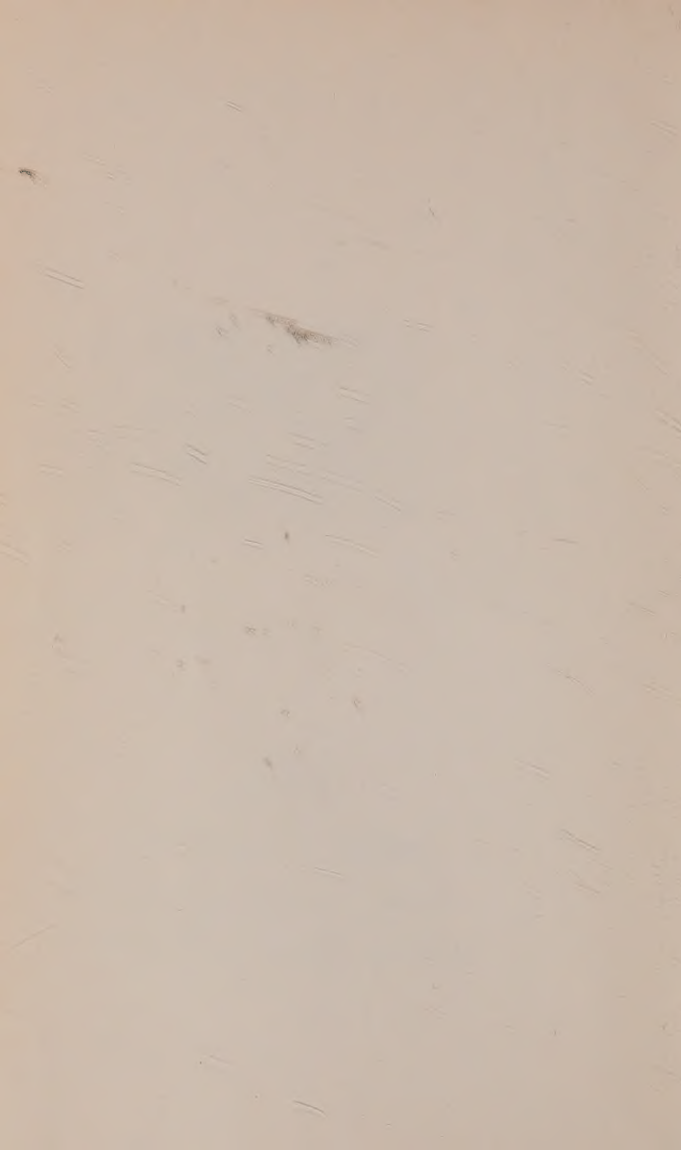
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“Father, will you not look at me?” (Jephthah's Daughter)

From the  
Illustrations

Academy Classics for Junior High Schools

EDITED BY STELLA S. CENTER

# PLAYS OLD AND NEW

SELECTED AND EDITED

BY

STELLA B. FINNEY

JAMAICA TRAINING SCHOOL, NEW YORK CITY

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## PREFACE

*Plays Old and New* includes plays by playwrights who have become notable figures in the development of modern drama, Alfred Noyes, Lady Gregory, Lord Dunsany, Anatole France. It appeals to different tastes, presenting to the young reader the historical play, the romance, the farce, the puppet play, the pageant, the play dramatizing famous incidents in history and literature, the play of fact as well as of fancy.

The text presents a variety of material, with scenes in Kentucky, China, Scotland, Sherwood Forest, Ireland, France, the Holy Land, "through the looking-glass," and the realm of the imagination.

The object of the text is to get pupils into the habit of reading, enjoying, and producing worth-while plays. All the plays in this book are well adapted to school production. The object of the editorial material is to emphasize understanding and appreciation of the plays rather than to introduce the pupils to the technique of the drama.

Eight drawings by Morgan Dennis illuminate the text and furnish helpful suggestions for staging the plays.

1. *Daniel Boone: Patriot* appeals to boys interested in scouting and adventure. It is purposely placed first because the story is simple and direct and is easily grasped by pupils not accustomed to reading plays.

2. *The Philosopher of Butterbiggens* is humorous. Its theme is readily understood by young people: most people like to have their own way.

## Preface

3. *Robin Hood in Sherwood* presents a familiar figure in a new guise.

4. *Told in a Chinese Garden* is a pleasant romance full of novelty and interest.

5. *Spreading the News* is a school favorite. The theme is a familiar one to pupils who play the game of "Gossip."

6. *Master Pierre Patelin* is a mediæval farce, very popular with the boys. They like the ending when the trickster gets a dose of his own medicine. The entire play or scenes from the play can be produced by boys.

7. *Alice in Wonderland* makes a strong appeal to girls, and they like to produce the play.

8. *Manikin and Minikin* is an excellent example of the puppet play.

9. *Jephthah's Daughter*, the only tragedy in the collection, is a forceful dramatization of the biblical narrative. It is representative of the best Jewish traditions.

10. *The Golden Doom* is typical of Dunsany's best work. It lends itself easily to school production. Excellent effects can be produced with simple stage furnishings.

11. *The Seven Gifts* is a pageant and lends variety to the collection. The play will serve schools and communities where a Christmas play may be needed.

12. *The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife*. While the young reader may fail to understand some of the satire on the professions of law and medicine, he will enjoy the humorous situations resulting when people talk too much.

S. B. F.



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# DANIEL BOONE: PATRIOT

BY

CONSTANCE D'ARCY MACKAY

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## CHARACTERS

DANIEL BOONE	A pioneer
ROGER KENTON	A lad
ALLAN RIGDON	Another
BLAIZE PRITCHARD	A trapper
EDWARD BRYAN	
JAMES COLBY	
BLACK FISH	An Indian Chief
HAWK EYE	A young Indian Brave
EAGLE'S FEATHER	Another
Other Pioneers, Trappers, Indians	

(NOTE: The events comprised in this play cover a longer period of time than is suggested here.)

## DANIEL BOONE: PATRIOT

SCENE:— *An open woodland. Place, the Blue Lick Springs, Kentucky, 1778. Trees right, left, and background. A slightly worn path leads to background where the salt springs are supposed to be. Tall poles with skins on them. A large kettle swings over the fire in right foreground. Near 5 it are other kettles, iron saucepans, and sacks for salt. In center background a hollow tree with swinging moss covering its opening. A fallen log near the kettles serves as a seat.*

*The play begins by young ALLAN RIGDON'S coming out of woods, left, with a few fagots which he feeds to the fire, bending 10 over it and looking in the kettle. JAMES COLBY comes by the half-worn path from background, carrying a bucket of water.*

Colby (*calling*). How comes the salt, Rigdon? If 'twere not that these licks give it in such abundance, 'twould try a lad's patience sorely. 'Tis like a girl's work 15 — tending kettles! And hardly a man's work — carrying water from a spring. (*Puts down pail of water.*) 'Faith, my arms are stiff, and my fingers also! If an Indian sprang at me from a thicket, I could not so much as cock my gun! What shall I do next? Carry more water? 20 The rest are still drawing it — *more* girl's work, if you'll let me call it so! (*As a slight sound is heard at left*) Heaven's mercy! What's that? (*Seizes gun.*) Is it Indians?

## Daniel Boone: Patriot

*Boone (quietly approaching from left).* And if it were, would your work be only *girl's* work, Colby? It shows you but a foolish lad to speak of it thus lightly. With all Boonesborough in need of salt, with our cattle and horses  
5 half perishing for the want of it, with the way that lies to the licks a very wilderness road for danger, 'twould hardly be called *girl's* work to tend these kettles — brave as our frontier women are. 'Tis *men's* work, Colby, although you be but lads who do it.

10 *Rigdon.* The wilderness makes men of lads right quickly; does it not, Master Boone?

*Boone (seated on log).* Aye, that it does. If it were not for the stress of the times, and the scarcity of men to keep watch, you should be back in Boonesborough, and  
15 not here, my lads. But 'twas for your courage and skill that I chose you. How comes the salt, Rigdon?

*Rigdon.* Finely, sir, finely. And the hunting?

*Boone (shaking his head).* Scarce enough to keep a fox alive. I must start forth again. There should be plenty  
20 of bison fat and deer meat for the days that are coming.

*(Enter KENTON with bucket of water. He puts it down, and salutes Boone.)* Well, Kenton, what news from the springs?

*Kenton.* The same as ever, sir. Blaize Pritchard and Edward Bryan stand guard while the rest of us carry water.  
25 The camp is as you see it. There's not been a sign of an Indian since you left us yesternight.

*Boone.* You do not ask what I've brought back with me, Kenton.

*Kenton.* I know, sir, that if there were game to be had  
30 you would have bagged it. But since we've come to the Blue Lick Springs the buffalo and deer seem to have gotten

wind of us. There's not so much as a rabbit scampering across the grass. It seems as if nature herself were in league against us.

*Boone.* Nonsense, lad. There'll be game enough soon, when I've foraged farther. Such times as these were sent to us to see whether we be of iron or putty.

*Kenton.* All the same, sir, I'll be glad when the boiling is done and we can pack our salt, and start through the forest for home. Long as the trail is, I would sooner have it than —

10

*Boone (clutching the rifle).* Hark! The crack of a branch — in the forest. On the defense, lads. I'll investigate. (*Goes into woods at right.*)

*Kenton (in a low voice, as the lads seize their rifles).* If it should be those venomous Shawnees! Before we left Boonesborough 'twas said that they'd already passed the war-pipe through their villages. They have been still so long, 'tis time for an uprising. (*Approaching footsteps are heard.*) Who comes?

*Colby (on the alert).* Just Boone himself.

20

*Rigdon.* What signs, sir?

*Boone (entering).* No signs at all, unless for the first time in their lives the Indians are shrewder than the Long Knives. There's not so much as a broken branch, or a newly fallen leaf. Now, lads, off to the spring with you. I'll tend this last kettle, and when 'tis boiled, I'll start on the trail again. There must be bison and deer for the followers of Daniel Boone. Lads, stay! If because we are unmolested, you should sometimes think that tending the kettle is work for girls — remember that we and our guns are all that stand between the Indians and the fort at Boones-

30

## Daniel Boone: Patriot

borough, where all the women and children are. Will you remember?

~ *All (speaking vehemently).* Aye, sir.

*Boone.* And as I take the trail I will remember the 5 lads who've lived on dry bread and the paring of bacon rinds, and who've tasted naught but parched buffalo meat in three weeks.

*Rigdon.* You've gone hungry yourself, sir.

*Boone.* Well, lads, 'tis all in the day's luck. We'll not 10 suffer for meat, if I can shoot an elk or a bear. (*Lads go out through trees in background, Boone watching them.*) Brave lads they are, and true! (*He tends the kettle, facing audience. After a moment Indians stealthily appear in background.*)

15 *Eagle's Feather (as two braves seize Boone).* Long Knife, surrender!

(*There is a brief struggle between Boone and the braves; but the former finds that it is useless to resist.*)

*Hawk Eye.* Shawnees on warpath. Long have 20 watched Boone and tried to trap him. Now have got him. Boone show trail to Boonesborough.

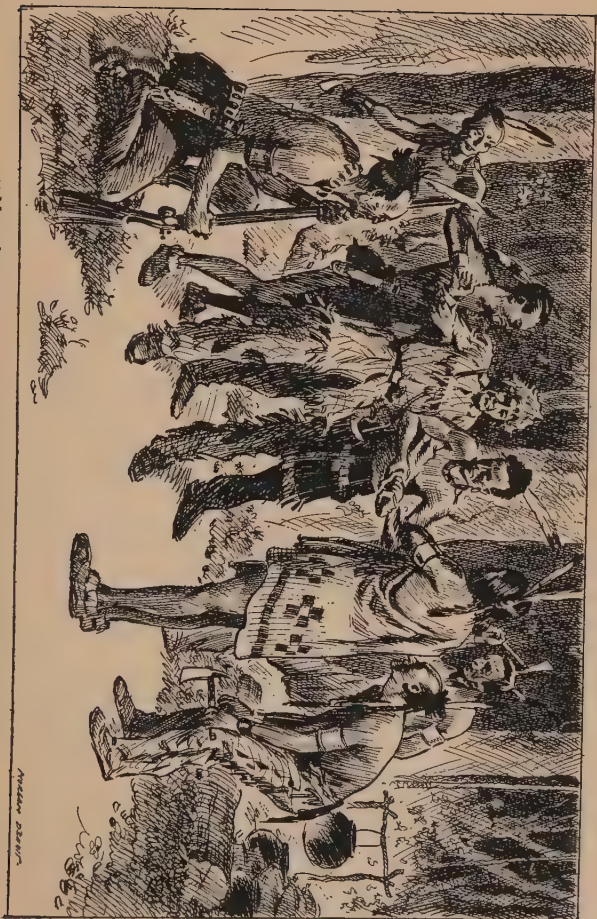
*Boone (to himself, in a tense whisper).* Boonesborough?

*Black Fish (majestically).* What answer does Long Knife Boone make? If Long Knife joins tribe, Long 25 Knife will be treated with honor. All at Boonesborough will be killed; but Boone's life will be spared if he joins tribe. What answer does Long Knife Boone make?

(*Boone considers deeply for a moment. His gun has been taken from him, but he is so closely surrounded that his arms* 30 *are left free. He considers deeply for another moment, arms*



“Now have got him. Boone show trail to Boonesborough.”





*crossed on breast, head bowed. Looks up for an instant. Gives a searching glance at the Indians. Considers again for a moment. Then raises his head.)*

*Boone. Long Knife says — yes! (Holds out his hands, smiling.)*

5

*All Indians (delighted at pantomime of acquiescence). Wah!*

*Black Fish (waving tomahawk in air). Wah!*

*All Indians (in chorus). Wah!*

*Boone. Wait! Black Fish try to kill Long Knife's 10 brother. Long Knife's brothers fight back. Kill maybe one brave. Maybe two braves. Maybe three braves. But — Boone speak to his white brothers. They surrender to Black Fish. No fighting. No braves killed. What does Black Fish answer?*

15

*Black Fish. Black Fish answers: Long Knife show great wisdom. Black Fish do as Long Knife says.*

*(Some of the Indians start in the direction of the spring.)*

*Hawk Eye (grunting). Umph!*

*(KENTON is suddenly brought in by two braves who have 20 captured him. As his eye falls on Boone his voice shrills with terror.)*

*Kenton. Oh, they have caught you! They have —*

*(The rest of the pioneers begin to appear from background, closely guarded by the Indians.)*

25

*Colby (as all of Boone's little band are brought in as captives). What's this? Not Boone a traitor?*

*Boone. Hush! (To the other white men) No use to*

## Daniel Boone: Patriot

fight. We are surrounded. (*To Black Fish*) Does Black Fish give me leave to speak to my comrades apart?

(*Black Fish nods assent. Boone and his band withdraw to left. The Indians withdraw to right. Each side holds a conference. That of the Indians is in pantomime.*)

Boone (*to his band*). No use to fight, lads. Put up your guns. (*Indicates Indians.*) Half a score more are in the woods behind us. If we surrender, we may gain some time. If we refuse, we're lost. They'll march at once on  
10 Boonesborough.

Kenton. Wilson's gone free, sir. He'll take Boonesborough the news of our capture.

Boone (*rapidly*). Aye; but he cannot take them the news of what Black' Fish means to do. No one in Boones-  
15 borough knows that the Indians are on the warpath. A massacre is planned. The fires are lit. The tomahawks are ready. We must gain time. 'Tis all that we can do. We must surrender. I'll break through when I can. (*Loudly*) Think well, my brothers. Here is freedom  
20 offered you, if you surrender. What do you say?

Pritchard (*loudly*). I say that we surrender.

(*Boone, turning, makes a gesture to the spot where their guns lie piled, then towards the Indians as one would say: "We give in."*)

25 *Black Fish*. My brothers, we, too, have had a council. Far in the North the British pay much gold for paleface prisoners.

Pritchard (*involuntarily*). Oh, Boone, we're sold!

Boone (*quickly*). No, saved! The British will take a  
30 ransom, and Boonesborough will pay it to the uttermost

farthing. (*In a low voice*) Come, strategy! Strategy! I will break through to-night.

*Pritchard.* Great Chief Black Fish, to you we have surrendered. With your braves we will take the trail to the British encampment. 5

*Black Fish (grunting with pleasure).* Umph! Much money for paleface prisoners. (*To Hawk Eye*) Give prisoners bison meat. Water. See they not die on road. No want to lose money that bring. Braves march now. Boone not go. Boone stay with us. 10

(*While Black Fish has been speaking the braves and their prisoners line up for departure. Meantime, from the woods in background other Indians have joined the group. Those who have captured Boone describe the feat in dumbshow. The newly arrived Indians bear food, a blanket or so, a war- 15 drum, pipes, etc.*)

*Boone (striving to speak gaily).* A good journey, my lads. I shall be thinking of you.

*Edward Bryan (low: aside, full of commiseration).* You will be here alone! 20

*Boone (hurriedly, seeing that Bryan's remark has been overheard by the Indians).* With my kind brothers! (*Quickly, seeing that Black Fish's back is turned*) March bravely, lads. Remember Boonesborough!

*Pritchard (moved).* Your hand, Boone. 25

*Boone (clasping Pritchard's hand).* My comrade!

(*They look at each other a long moment. Then the line, Indian-guarded, and led by Hawk Eye, marches out, left.*)

---

LINE 1. **farthing**: an English coin worth about one-half cent.  
19. **commiseration** (kǒ-mǐz'ēr-ā'shǔn): sympathy; sorrow.

## Daniel Boone: Patriot

*Black Fish.* Now we make a great feast. Celebrate.

(They all sit on ground. War-pipe is passed. Gourds with grape wine. Dried fish. Dried fruits. General hum of excitement and pleasure. Animated and colorful groups. Boone smokes the war-pipe when it is passed to him. Drinks and eats freely with others. Through it all, now soft, now loud, sounds the drone of the war-drum. Now and again a young buck yells jubilantly, or ejaculates a shrill "E-yah!" of pleasure. They rise from feasting to dance in a war-circle about the drum, right. Boone does a few steps with them, and then retreats to left of stage. More dances. Speeches with short guttural words and grunts. Waving of tomahawks. Shrill cries. Another circle is formed about the war-drum. Attention drifts away from Boone. Finally, after a second dance about the war-drum, Eagle's Feather gives a sudden cry of "Boone! Boone gone!" Intense excitement. Cries of rage. General search as Indians go out right and left. One or two lag behind and look in bushes. Eagle's Feather pulls back swinging moss from hollow tree and looks within. Then the baffled Indians dart off stage, right. A moment later BOONE enters from left. Looks warily about him, right, left, and background. Then darts into hollow tree. A moment later the Indians, headed by EAGLE'S FEATHER, enter right, left, and background. They gesticulate with cries of "Boonesborough!" Some urge taking the way at left, others the way at right. Eagle's Feather is among the latter. The way at right is ultimately decided upon. With a final yell of "Boonesborough!" and great swinging of tomahawks, all the Indians go out right. The drone of the

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LINE 2. *Gourds* (gōrdz): cups made from the shell of fruit.

## Daniel Boone : Patriot

*war-drum begins, and grows fainter and fainter as they go into the forest. The gourds and blankets and pipes they have collected are taken with them as supplies for the march.)*

*Boone (coming triumphantly out of his hollow tree). They have taken the wrong trail! I am free to warn my people! I can gain the fort ere the Indians reach it! Boonesborough is saved.*

*(Exit Boone, running left. The grassy space is left vacant, and the scene ends.)*





# THE PHILOSOPHER OF BUTTERBIGGENS

BY

HOWARD CHAPIN

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## CHARACTERS

DAVID PIRNIE

LIZZIE            His daughter

JOHN BELL       His son-in-law

ALEXANDER     John's little son

## THE PHILOSOPHER OF BUTTERBIGGENS

SCENE:—*John Bell's tenement at Butterbiggens. It consists of the very usual "two rooms, kitchen, and bath," a concealed bed in the parlor and another in the kitchen enabling him to house his family—consisting of himself, his wife, his little son, and his aged father-in-law—therein. The kitchen-and-living room is a good-sized square room. The right wall (our right as we look at it) is occupied by a huge built-in dresser, sink, and coal bunker, the left wall by a high-manteled, ovened, and boilered fireplace, the recess on either side of which contains a low painted cupboard. Over the far cupboard hangs a picture of a ship, but over the near one is a small square window. The far wall has two large doors in it, that on the right leading to the lobby, and that on the left appertaining to the old father-in-law's concealed bed.*

*The walls are distempered a brickish red. The ceiling once was white. The floor is covered with bright linoleum and two rag rugs—one before the fire—a large one—and a smaller one before the door of the concealed bed.*

*A deal table is just to right of center. A long flexible gas-bracket depends from the ceiling above it. Another many-jointed gas-bracket projects from the middle of the high man-*

---

LINE 1. *Butterbiggens*: a suburb of Glasgow. 8. *bunker*: bin. 15. *distempered*: colored. 19. *deal*: made of fir or pine.

## The Philosopher of Butterbiggens

*telpiece, its flame turned down towards the stove. There are wooden chairs at the table, above, below, and to left of it. A high-backed easy chair is above the fire, a kitchen elbow-chair below it.*

5 *The kitchen is very tidy. A newspaper newly fallen to the rug before the fire and another — an evening one — spread flat on the table are (besides a child's mug and plate, also on the table) the only things not stowed in their prescribed places. It is evening — the light beyond the little square*  
10 *window being the gray dimness of a long northern twilight which slowly deepens during the play. When the curtain rises it is still light enough in the room for a man to read if the print be not too faint and his eyes be good. The warm light of the fire leaps and flickers through the gray, showing up with*  
15 *exceptional clearness the deep-lined face of old DAVID PIRNIE, who is discovered half-risen from his armchair above the fire, standing on the hearth-rug, his body bent and his hand on the chair arm. He is a little, feeble old man with a well-shaped head and weather-beaten face, set off by a grizzled beard and*  
20 *whiskers, wiry and vigorous, in curious contrast to the wreath of snowy hair that encircles his head. His upper lip is shaven. He wears an old suit — the unbuttoned waistcoat of which shows an old flannel shirt. His slippers are low at the heel and his socks loose at the ankles.*

25 *The old man's eyes are fixed appealingly on those of his daughter, who stands in the half-open door, her grasp on the handle, meeting his look squarely — a straight-browed, black-haired, determined young woman of six or seven and twenty. Her husband, JOHN, seated at the table in his shirt-sleeves*  
30 *with his head in his hands, reads hard at the paper and tries to look unconcerned.*

## The Philosopher of Butterbiggens

*David.* Aw — but, Lizzie —

*Lizzie* (*with splendid firmness*). It's nae use, feyther. I'm no' gaein' to gie in to the wean. Ye've been tellin' yer stories to him nicht after nicht for dear knows how long, and he's gettin' to expect them. 5

*David.* Why should he no' expect them?

*Lizzie.* It disna do for weans to count on things so. He's layin' up a sad disappointment for himself yin o' these days.

*David.* He's gettin' a sad disappointment the noo. 10 Och, come on, Lizzie. I'm no' gaein' to dee just yet, an' ye can break him off gradually when I begin to look like to.

*Lizzie.* Who's talkin' o' yer deein', feyther?

*David.* Ye were speakin' o' the disappointment he was layin' up for himself if he got to count on me — 15

*Lizzie.* I wasna thinkin' o' yer deein', feyther — only — it's no guid for a bairn —

*David.* Where's the harm in my giein' him a bit story before he gangs tae his bed?

*Lizzie.* I'm no sayin' there's ony harm in it this yinst, 20 feyther; but it's no richt to gae on nicht after nicht wi' never a break —

*David.* Whit wey is it no richt if there's nae harm in it?

*Lizzie.* It's giein' in to the wean.

*David.* Whit wey should ye no' gie in to him if there's 25 nae harm in it?

*Lizzie* (*keeping her patience with difficulty*). Because it gets him into the habit.

---

LINE 2. **nae** : no. In Scotch dialect *ae* is sounded like *e*, and takes the place of *e* or *o* or *a*. 3. **wean** (*wēn*) : Scotch name for baby. 8. **yin** (*yīn*) : one. 10. **noo** : now.

## The Philosopher of Butterbiggens

*David.* But why should he no' get into the habit if there's nae harm in it?

(*John at the table chuckles. Lizzie gives him a look, but he meets it not.*)

5 *Lizzie.* Really, feyther, ye nicht be a wean yerself, ye're that persistent.

*David.* No, Lizzie, I'm no' persistent, I'm reasoning wi' ye. Ye said there was nae harm in my tellin' him a bit story, an' now ye say I'm not to because it'll get  
10 him into the habit; an' what I'm askin' ye is, where's the harm o' his gettin' into the habit if there's nae harm in it?

*Lizzie.* Oh, aye; ye can be gey clever, twistin' the words in my mouth, feyther; but richt is richt, an' wrang's  
15 wrang, for all yer cleverness.

*David (earnestly).* I'm no bein' clever ava, Lizzie — no' the noo — I'm just tryin' to make ye see that, if ye admit there's nae harm in a thing, ye canna say there's ony harm in it, an' (*pathetically*) I'm wantin' to tell wee Alexander a  
20 bit story before he gangs to his bed.

*John (aside to her).* Och, wumman —

*Lizzie.* T'ts, John; ye'd gie in tae onybody if they were just persistent enough.

*John.* He's an auld man.

25 *Lizzie (really exasperated).* I ken fine he's an auld man, John, and ye're a young yin, an' Alexander's gaein' to be anither, an' I'm a lone wumman among the lot o' ye, but I'm no' gaein' to gie in to —

---

LINE 13. gey (gā) : rather. 16. ava : at all. no' the noo : not now. 25. ken : know.

## The Philosopher of Butterbiggens

*John (bringing a fresh mind to bear upon the argument).*  
Efter a', Lizzie, there's nae harm —

*Lizzie (almost with a scream of anger).* Och, now you've stairted, have you? Harm. Harm. Harm. You're talkin' about *harm*, and I'm talking about richt an' wrang. <sup>5</sup> You'd see your son grow up a drunken keelie, an mebbe a thief an' a murderer, so long as you could say there was nae harm in it.

*David (expostulating with some cause).* But I cudna say there was nae harm in that, Lizzie, an' I wudna. Only <sup>10</sup> when there's nae harm —

*Lizzie.* Och. (*Exits, calling off to the cause of the trouble.*) Are ye in yer bed yet, Alexander? (*Shuts door with a click.*)

*David (standing on hearth-rug and shaking his head more <sup>15</sup> in sorrow than in anger).* She's no reasonable, ye ken, John; she disna argue fair. I'm no complaining o' her mither, but it's a wee thing hard that the only twa women I've known to be really chatty an' argumentative with should ha' been just like that. An' me that fond o' <sup>20</sup> women's society. (*He lowers himself into his chair.*)

*John.* They're all like it.

*David (judiciously).* I wudna go sae far as to say that, John. Ye see, I've only kent they twa to study carefully — an' it's no fair to judge the whole sex by just the twa <sup>25</sup> examples, an' it were — (*Running on*) But it's gey hard, an' I was wantin' to tell wee Alexander a special fine story the nicht. (*Removes glasses and blinks his eyes.*) Aweel.

*John (comforting).* Mebbe the morn —

---

LINE 6. *keelie*: man marked by something that he does.  
23. *wudna*: would not. 29. *the morn*: to-morrow.

## The Philosopher of Butterbiggens

*David.* If it's no richt the nicht, it'll no be richt the morn's nicht.

*John.* Ye canna say that, feyther. It wasna wrang last nicht.

5 *David (bitterly).* Mebbe it was, an' Lizzie had no' foun' it out.

*John.* Aw, noo, feyther, dinna get saurcastic.

*David (between anger and tears, weakly).* I canna help it. I'm black affrontit. I was wantin' to tell wee Alexander a  
10 special fine story the nicht, an' now here's Lizzie wi' her richt's richt an' wrang's wrang — Och, there's nae reason in the women.

*John.* We has to gie in to them though.

*David.* Aye. That's why.

15 *(There is a pause. The old man picks up his paper again and settles his glasses on his nose. John rises, and with a spill from the mantelpiece lights the gas there, which he then bends to throw the light to the old man's advantage.)*

*David.* Thank ye, John. Do ye hear him?

20 *John (erect on hearth-rug).* Who?

*David.* Wee Alexander.

*John.* No.

*David.* Greetin' his heart out.

*John.* Och, he's no greetin'. Lizzie's wi' him.

25 *David.* I ken fine Lizzie's wi' him, but he's greetin' for a' her. He was wantin' to hear yon story o' the kelpies

---

LINE 1. the morn's nicht : to-morrow night. 9. I'm black affrontit : I'm terribly insulted. 17. spill : a small bit of wood or rolled paper used to light lamps. 23. Greetin' : grieving. 26. kelpies : water sprites in the form of horses.



## The Philosopher of Butterbiggens

up to Cross Hill wi' the tram — (*Breaking his mood impatiently*) Och.

*John* (*crossing to table and lighting up there*). It's gettin' dark gey early. We'll shin be haein' tea by the gas.

*David* (*rustling his paper*). Aye — (*Suddenly*) There 5 never was a female philosopher, ye ken, John.

*John*. Was there no'?

*David*. No. (*Angrily, in a gust*) An' there never will be! (*Then more calmly*) An' yet there's an' awful lot o' philosophy about women, John. 10

*John*. Aye?

*David*. Och, aye. They're that unreasonable, an' yet ye canna reason them down; an' they're that weak, an' yet ye canna make them gie in tae ye. Of course, ye'll say ye canna reason doon a stane, or make a clod o' earth gie 15 in tae ye.

*John*. Will I?

*David*. Aye. An' ye'll be richt. But then I'll tell ye a stane will na answer ye back, an' a clod of earth will na try to withstand ye; so how can ye argue them down? 20

*John* (*convinced*). Ye canna.

*David*. Richt! Ye canna! But a wumman *will* answer ye back, an' she *will* stand against ye, an' yet ye canna argue her down though ye have strength an' reason on your side an' she's talkin' naething but blether about 25 richt's richt an' wrang's wrang, an' sendin' a poor bairn off t' his bed i' the yin room an' leavin' her auld feyther all alone by the fire in anither an' — ye ken — Philosophy —

## The Philosopher of Butterbiggens

(He ceases to speak and wipes his glasses again. John, intensely troubled, tiptoes up to the door and opens it a foot. The wails of Alexander can be heard muffled by a farther door. John calls off.)

5 John. Lizzie.

(LIZZIE immediately comes into sight outside the door with a "Shsh.")

John. Yer feyther's greetin'.

Lizzie (with a touch of exasperation). Och, I'm no  
10 heedin'! There's another wean in there greetin' too, an'  
I'm no heedin' him neither, an' he's greetin' twicet as loud  
as the auld yin.

John (shocked). Ye're heartless, wumman.

Lizzie (with patience). No, I'm no' heartless, John; but  
15 there's too much heart in this family, an' someone's got to  
use their heid.

(David cranes round the side of his chair to catch what they are saying. She stops and comes to him kindly but with womanly firmness.)

20 Lizzie. I'm vexed ye should be disappointed, feyther,  
but ye see, don't ye —

(A singularly piercing wail from Alexander goes up. Lizzie rushes to silence him.)

Lizzie. Mercy! The neighbors will think we're mur-  
25 derin' him. (The door closes behind her.)

David (nodding for a space as he revolves the woman's attitude). Ye hear that, John?

---

LINE 26. *revolves the woman's attitude*: thinks about Lizzie's words and actions.

## The Philosopher of Butterbiggens

*John.* Whit?

*David (with quiet irony).* She's vexed I should be disappointed. The wumman thinks she's richt! Women always think they're richt — mebbe it's that that makes them that obstinate. (*With the ghost of a twinkle*) She's 5  
feart o' the neighbors, though.

*John (stolidly).* A' women are feart o' the neighbors.

*David (reverting).* Puir wee man. I telt ye he was greetin', John. He's disappointed fine. (*Pondering*)  
D' ye ken whit I'm thinkin', John? 10

*John.* Whit?

*David.* I'm thinkin' he's too young to get his ain way, an' I'm too auld, an' it's a fine thoct!

*John.* Aye?

*David.* Aye. I never thoct of it before, but that's 15  
what it is. He's no' come to it yet, an' I'm past it. (*Suddenly*) What's the most important thing in life, John?

(*John opens his mouth — and shuts it again unused.*)

*David.* Ye ken perfectly well. What is it ye're wantin' 20  
a' the time?

*John.* Different things.

*David (satisfied).* Aye — different things! But ye  
want them a', do ye no'?

*John.* Aye. 25

*David.* If ye had yer ain way ye'd hae them a', eh?

*John.* I wud that.

*David (triumphant).* Then is that no' what ye want:  
yer ain way?

## The Philosopher of Butterbiggens

*John (enlightened).* Losh!

*David (warming to it).* That's what life is, John — gettin' yer ain way. First ye're born, an' ye canna dae anything but cry; but God's given yer mither ears an' ye  
5 get yer way by just cryin' for it. (*Hastily, anticipating criticism*) I ken that's no exactly in keeping with what I've been saying aboot Alexander — but a new-born bairnie's an awfu' delicate thing, an' the Lord gets it past its infancy by a dispensation of Providence very unsettling  
10 to oor poor human understandings. Ye'll notice 'the weans cease gettin' their way by juist greetin' for it as shin as they're old enough to seek it otherwise.

*John.* The habit hangs on to them whiles.

*David.* It does that. (*With a twinkle*) An' mebbe, if  
15 God's gi'en yer neighbors ears an' ye live close, ye'll get yer wey by a dispensation o' Providence a while longer. But there's things ye'll hae to do for yerself gin ye want to — an' ye will. Ye'll want to hold oot yer hand, an' ye will hold oot yer hand; an' ye'll want to stand up and walk,  
20 and ye *will* stand up and walk; an' ye'll want to dae as ye please, and ye *will* dae as ye please; and then ye are practiced an' learnt in the art of gettin' yer ain way — and ye're a man!

*John.* Man, feyther — ye're wonderful!

25 *David (complacently).* I'm a philosopher, John. But it goes on mebbe.

*John.* Aye?

*David.* Aye: mebbe ye think ye'd like to make ither folk mind ye an' yer way, an' ye try, an' if it comes off ye're  
30 a big man an' mebbe the master o' a vessel wi' three men

---

LINE 1. Losh: My land! For goodness' sake!

## The Philosopher of Butterbiggens

an' a boy under ye, as I was, John. (*Dropping into the minor*) An' then ye come doon the hill.

*John (apprehensively)*. Doon the hill?

*David*. Aye — doon to mebbe wantin' to tell a wean a bit story before he gangs tae his bed, an' ye canna dae even 5 that. An' then a while more an' ye want to get to yer feet an' walk, and ye canna; an' a while more an' ye want to lift up yer hand, an' ye canna — an' in a while more ye're just forgotten an' done wi'.

*John*. Aw, feyther!

10

*David*. Dinna look sae troubled, John. I'm no' afraid to dee when my time comes. It's these hints that I'm done wi' before I'm dead that I dinna like.

*John*. What'n hints?

*David*. Well — Lizzie an' her richt's richt and wrang's 15 wrang when I think o' tellin' wee Alexander a bit story before he gangs tae his bed.

*John (gently)*. Ye are a wee thing persistent, feyther.

*David*. No, I'm no' persistent, John. I've gied in. I'm a philosopher, John, an' a philosopher kens when he's 20 done wi'.

*John*. Aw, feyther!

*David (getting lower and lower)*. It's gey interesting, philosophy, John, an' the only philosophy worth thinkin' about is the philosophy of growing old — because that's 25 what we're a' doing, a' living things. There's nae philosophy in a stane, John; he's juist a stane, an' in a hundred years he'll be juist a stane still — unless he's broken up, an' then he'll be juist not a stane, but he'll no' ken what's happened to him, because he didna break up gradual and first 30

## The Philosopher of Butterbiggens

lose his boat an' then his hoose, an' then hae his wee grandson taken away when he was for tellin' him a bit story before he gangs tae his bed. It's yon losing yer grip bit by bit and kennin' that yer losin' it that makes a philosopher, John.

5 *John.* If I kennt what ye meant by philosophy, feyther, I'd be better able to follow ye.

(*LIZZIE enters quietly and closes door after her.*)

*John.* Is he asleep?

*Lizzie.* No, he's no' asleep, but I've shut both doors,  
10 and the neighbors canna hear him.

*John.* Aw, Lizzie —

*Lizzie (sharply).* John —

*David.* Whit was I tellin' ye, John, about weans gettin' their ain way if the neighbors had ears an' they lived close?  
15 Was I no' richt?

*Lizzie (answering for John with some acerbity).* Aye, ye were richt, feyther, nae doot; but we dinna live that close here, an' the neighbors canna hear him at the back o' the hoose.

20 *David.* Mebbe that's why ye changed Alexander into the parlor an' gied me the bed in here when it began to get cold —

*Lizzie (hurt).* Aw, no, feyther; I brought ye in here to be warmer —

25 *David (placably).* I believe ye, wumman — (*with a faint twinkle*) but it's turned oot luckily, has it no'?

(*David waits for a reply but gets none. Lizzie fetches needlework from the dresser drawer and sits above table. David's face and voice take on a more thoughtful tone.*)

---

LINE 16. *acerbity* (ä-sûr'bî-tî): harshness.

## The Philosopher of Butterbiggens

*David (musing).* Puir wee man! If he was in here you'd no' be letting him greet his heart oot where onybody could hear him. Wud ye?

*Lizzie (calmly).* Mebbe I'd no'.

*John.* Ye ken fine ye'd no', wumman. 5

*Lizzie.* John, thread my needle an' dinna take feyther's part against me.

*John (surprised).* I'm no'.

*Lizzie.* No, I ken ye're no meanin' to, but you men are that thrang. 10

*(She is interrupted by a loud squall from David, which he maintains, eyes shut, chair-arms gripped, and mouth open, for nearly half a minute, before he cuts it off abruptly and looks at the startled couple at the table.)*

*Lizzie.* Mercy, feyther, whit's wrang wi' ye? 15

*David (collectedly).* There's naethin' wrang wi' me, Lizzie, except that I'm wantin' to tell wee Alexander a bit story —

*Lizzie (firmly but very kindly).* But ye're no' goin' to — 20

*(She breaks off in alarm as her father opens his mouth preparatory to another yell, which, however, he postpones to speak to John.)*

*David.* Ye mind whit I was saying aboot the dispensation o' Providence to help weans till they could try for 25 theirselves, John?

*John.* Aye.

*David.* Did it no' occur to ye then that there ought to

---

LINE 10. thrang : busy with yourselves ; stupid.

## The Philosopher of Butterbiggens

be some sort of dispensation to look after the auld yins who were past it?

*John.* No.

*David.* Aweel — it didna occur to me at the time —  
5 (and he lets off another prolonged wail).

*Lizzie* (going to him). Shsh! Feyther! The neighbors will hear ye!

*David* (desisting as before). I ken fine; I'm no' at the back of the hoose. (Shorter wail)

10 *Lizzie* (almost in tears). They'll be coming to ask.

*David.* Let them. They'll no' ask me. (Squall)

*Lizzie.* Feyther — ye're no' behaving well. John —

*John.* Aye?

*Lizzie* (helplessly). Naething — feyther, stop it.  
15 They'll think ye're clean daft.

*David* (ceasing to howl and speaking with gravity). I ken it fine, Lizzie; an' it's no easy for a man who has been respeckit an' lookit up to a' his life to be thought daft at eighty-three; but the most important thing in life is to get  
20 yer ain way. (Resumes wailing.)

*Lizzie* (puzzled, to John). Whit's that?

*John.* It's his philosophy that he was talking about.

*David* (firmly). An' I'm gaein' to tell wee Alexander yon bit story, tho' they think me daft for it.

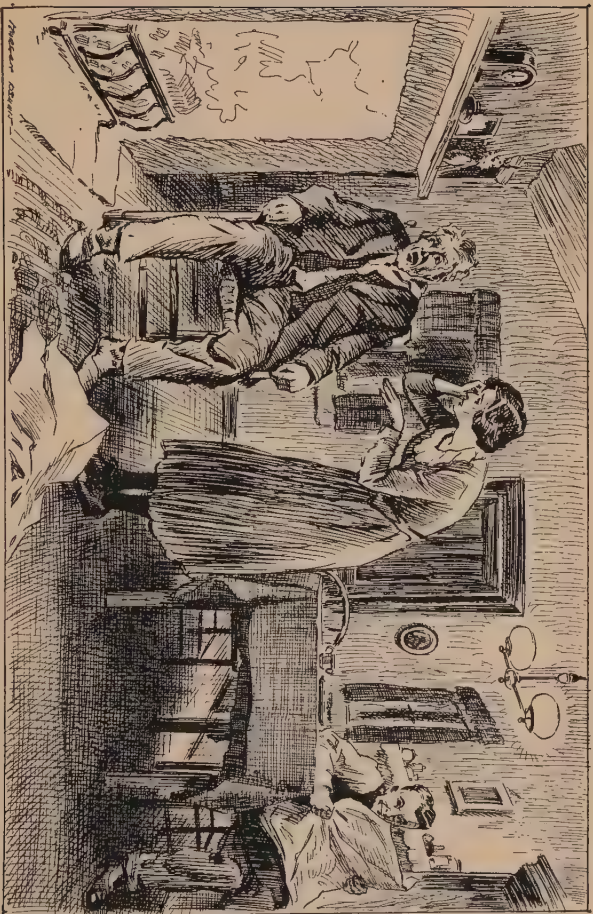
25 *Lizzie.* But it's no' for his ain guid, feyther. I've telt ye so, but ye wudna listen.

*David.* I wudna listen, wumman! It was you wudna listen to me when I axed ye whit harm — (Chuckles. Checking himself) No! I'm no gaein' to hae that ower  
30 again. I've gied up arguing wi' women. I'm juist gaein'

---

LINE 15. daft : insane; crazy. 17. respeckit : respected.





“Shsh! Feyher! The neighbors will hear ye!”



## The Philosopher of Butterbiggens

tae greet loud an' sair till wee Alexander's brought in here  
to hae his bit story; an' if the neighbors — (*Loud squall*)

*Lizzie (aside to John).* He's fair daft!

*John (aghast).* Ye'd no send him to —

*Lizzie (reproachfully).* John!

5

(*A louder squall from the old man*)

*Lizzie (beating her hands together distractedly).* He'll be  
— We'll — He'll — Och!!! (*Resigned and beaten*) John,  
go and bring wee Alexander in here.

(*John is off like a shot. The opening of the door of the 10  
other room can be told by the burst of Alexander's voice. The  
old man's wails have stopped the second his daughter capit-  
ulated. JOHN returns with ALEXANDER and bears him to his  
grandfather's waiting knee. The boy's tears and howls have  
ceased and he is smiling triumphantly. He is of course in 15  
his night-shirt and a blanket, which Grandpa wraps round  
him, turning toward the fire.*)

*Lizzie (looking on with many nods of the head and smacks  
of the lips).* There you are! That's the kind o' boy he is.  
Greet his heart oot for a thing an' stop the moment he 20  
gets it.

*David.* Dae ye expect him to gae on after he's got it?  
Ah, but, Alexander, ye didna get it yer lane this time; it  
took the twa o' us. An' hard work it was for the Auld Yin!  
Man! (*Playing hoarse*) I doot I've enough voice left for 25  
a — (*Bursting out very loud and making the boy laugh*)  
Aweel! Whit's it gaein' to be — eh?

### CURTAIN

---

LINE 1. sair (sār): sorely; sorrowfully. 12. capitulated:  
gave in; was beaten. 23. yer lane: by yourself.



# ROBIN HOOD IN SHERWOOD

BY

ALFRED NOYES

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## PERSONS OF THE DRAMA

ROBIN	Earl of Huntingdon, known as "Robin Hood"
LITTLE JOHN	} Outlaws and followers of Robin Hood
FRIAR TUCK	
MUCH, THE MILLER'S SON	
REYNOLD GREENLEAF	
BLONDEL	King Richard's minstrel
OBERON	King of the Fairies
TITANIA	Queen of the Fairies
ORCHIS	The trumpeter
SHADOW-OF-A-LEAF	A Fool
MARIAN FITZWALTER	Known as Maid Marian, betrothed to Robin Hood
JENNY	Maid to Marian
WIDOW SCARLET	Mother of Will Scarlet
Fairies, merry men.	

## ROBIN HOOD IN SHERWOOD

SCENE I: — *Sherwood Forest: An open glade, showing on the right the mouth of the outlaw's cave. It is about sunset. The giant figure of LITTLE JOHN comes out of the cave, singing.*

*Little John (sings).*

5

When Spring comes back to England  
And crowns her brows with may,  
Round the merry moonlit world  
She goes the greenwood way.

*(He stops and calls in stentorian tones.)*

10

Much! Much! Much!

Where has that monstrous giant the miller's son  
Hidden himself?

*(Enter MUCH, a dwarf-like figure, carrying a large bundle of ferns.)*

15

*Much.*

Hush, hush, child, here I am!

And here's our fairy feather-beds, ha! ha!

There's nothing makes a better bed than ferns

Either for sleeping sound or rosy dreams.

*Little John.* Take care the fern-seed that the fairies use 20  
Get not among thy yellow locks, my Titan,

---

LINE 10. *stentorian* (stĕn-tō'ri-ăn): loud or powerful.  
21. *Titan*: a giant.

## Robin Hood in Sherwood

Or thou'lt wake up invisible. There's none  
Too much of Much already.

*Much* (looking up at him impudently). It would take  
Our big barn full of fern-seed, I misdoubt,  
5 To make thee walk invisible, Little John.

*Little John*. Invisible? Ay, but what would Jenny say  
To such a ghostly midge as thou would'st be?

*Much*. Why, there now, that's a teaser.

My poor Jenny takes  
10 The smallness of her Much sorely to heart!  
And though I often tell her half a loaf  
(Ground in our mill) is better than no bread,  
She weeps, poor thing, that an impartial heaven  
Bestows on her so small a crumb of bliss  
15 As me! You'd scarce believe, now, half the nostrums  
That girl has made me gulp, in the vain hope  
That I, the frog, should swell to an ox like thee.  
And if I have to swallow half the herbs  
In Sherwood, I shall stalk a giant yet,  
20 Shoulder to shoulder with thee, Little John,  
And crack thy head at quarter-staff. But don't,  
Don't joke about it. 'Tis a serious matter.

*Little John*. Into the cave, then, with thy feather-bed.  
Old Much, thy father, waits thee there to make  
25 A table of green turfs for Robin Hood.

We shall have guests anon.

*Much* (going towards the cave). O, my poor father.  
Now, there's a sad thing, too. He's so ashamed

---

LINE 15. *nostrums* : quack medicines. 21. *quarter-staff* : a staff formerly used as a weapon, wielded with one hand in the middle and the other between middle and end.



## Robin Hood in Sherwood

Of his descendants. Why for some nine years  
He shut his eyes whenever he looked at me.

*(Exit into the cave.)*

*Little John.*

Skip, you chatterer!

Here comes our master. *(Enter ROBIN HOOD.)* 5

Master, where hast thou been?

I feared some harm had come to thee. What's this?

This was a cloth-yard shaft that tore thy coat!

*Robin.* Oh, ay, they barked my shoulder;

I got it on the borders of the wood. 10

St. Nicholas, my lad, they're on the watch.

*Little John.* What didst thou there? They're on the  
watch, i' faith!

A squirrel could not pass them. Why, my namesake  
Prince John would sell his soul to get thy head, 15

And both his ears for Lady Marian;

And whether his ears or soul be worth the more,

I know not. When the first lark flittered up

To sing, at dawn, I woke; and thou wast gone.

What didst thou there? 20

*Robin.*

Well, first I went to swim

In the deep pool below the mill.

*Little John.*

I swam

Enough last night to last me many a day.

What then? 25

*Robin.* Why, Little John, I went and tried to shoot  
A grey goose wing thro' Lady Marian's casement.

*Little John.* Oh, ay, and a pink nosegay tied beneath it.

---

LINE 8. **cloth-yard shaft**: an arrow about twenty-seven inches long.

## Robin Hood in Sherwood

Now, master, you'll forgive your Little John —  
But that's a midsummer madness. But why —  
You are wounded — why are you so pale?

*Robin.*

No — no —

5 Not wounded; but oh, my good faithful friend,  
She is not there! I wished to send her warning.  
I could not creep much closer; but I swear  
I think the castle is in the hands of John.  
I saw some men upon the battlements,  
10 Not hers — I know — not hers!

*Little John.*

Hist, who comes here?

*(He seizes his bow and stands ready to shoot.)*

*Robin.* Stop, man, it is the fool. Thank God, the fool,  
Shadow-of-a-Leaf, my Marian's dainty fool.  
15 How now, good fool, what news? What news?

*(Enter SHADOW-OF-A-LEAF.)*

*Shadow-of-a-leaf.*

Good fool!

Should I be bad, sir, if I chanced to bring  
No news at all? That is the wise man's way.  
20 Thank heaven, I've lost my wits. I am but a leaf  
Dancing upon the wild winds of the world,  
A prophet blown before them. Well, this evening,  
It is that lovely gray wind from the west  
That silvers all the fields and all the seas,  
25 And I'm the herald of May!

*Robin.*

Come, Shadow-of-a-Leaf,

I pray thee, do not jest.

---

LINE 9. **battlements** : low walls about the edge of the roof of a castle.

## Robin Hood in Sherwood

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf.* I do not jest.

I am vaunt-courier to a gentleman,  
A sweet slim page in Lincoln green who comes,  
Wood-knife on hip, and wild rose in his face,  
With golden news of Marian.

5

*Robin.* Go, Little John. (*Little John goes into the cave.*)  
Well, Shadow-of-a-Leaf, where is he?

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf.* At this moment  
His hair is tangled in a rose bush.  
Nay, he is free.

10

Come, master page, here is that thief of love,  
Give him your message. I'll to Little John.

(*Exit into the cave. Enter MARIAN, as a page in Lincoln green, her face muffled in a hood.*)

*Robin.* Good even, master page, what is thy news  
Of Lady Marian? (*She stands silent.*)

15

Answer me quickly, come,  
Hide not thy face! (*She still stands muffled and silent.*)

Come, boy, the fool is chartered,  
Not thou; and I'll break off this hazel switch  
And make thee dance if thou not answer me.  
What? Silent still? Sirrah, this hazel wand  
Shall lace thee till thou tingle, top to toe.  
I'll . . .

20

*Marian (unmuffling).* Robin!

25

*Robin (catches her in his arms with a cry).*

Marian! Marian!

---

LINE 2. **vaunt-courier**: herald; forerunner. 3. **page**: a boy of gentle parentage who waits on a royal personage. 19. **chartered**: under contract. 22. **Sirrah**: fellow. 23. **lace**: to lash with a whip, making stripes on the body.

## Robin Hood in Sherwood

*Marian.*

Fie upon you,

Robin; you did not know me.

*Robin (embracing her).*

Oh, you seemed

Ten thousand miles away. This is not moonlight,

5 And I am not Endymion. Could I dream

My Dian would come wandering through the fern  
Before the sunset?

*Marian.*

But you

Were hidden in the heart of Sherwood, Robin,

10 And yet I found you.

*Robin.*

Ay, the young moon stole

In pity down to her poor shepherd boy.

*Marian.* Oh, Robin, first a rose and then a moon,

The fickle moon — Oh, hide me from the world;

15 Sweetheart, sweetheart, Prince John will hunt me down!

*Robin.* Nay, but tell me what this means?

How came you here?

*Marian.*

The Queen — she came last night;

She said five hundred men

20 Were watching round the borders of the wood;

But she herself would take me safely through them,

Said that I should be safer here with Robin —

She had your name so pat — and I gave way.

*Robin.* Marian, she might have trapped you to Prince

25 John.

*Marian.* No; no; I think she wanted me to guide her

Here to your hiding place. She wished to see you

Herself, unknown to John, I know not why.

---

LINE 5. **Endymion** (ěn-dím'ŷ-ŏn): in mythology, a beautiful young man loved by Diana, the goddess of the moon. 6. **Dian** (dī'ăn): the goddess of the moon and of hunting.

## Robin Hood in Sherwood

I bade my maid,

Jenny, go pack her small belongings up  
This morning, and to follow with Friar Tuck  
And Widow Scarlet. They'll be here anon.

*Robin.*

O Marian, why, 5

Why did you trust her? Listen, who comes here?

(Enter FRIAR TUCK, JENNY, and WIDOW SCARLET.)

Ah, Friar Tuck!

*Marian.*

Good Jenny!

*Robin.*

And Widow Scarlet! 10

*Friar Tuck.* O children, children, this is thirsty  
weather!

The heads I have cracked, the ribs I have thwacked, the  
bones

I have bashed with my good quarter-staff, to bring 15  
These bits of womankind through Sherwood Forest.

*Robin.* What, was there scuffling, friar?

*Friar Tuck.*

Some two or three

Pounced on us, ha! ha! ha!

*Jenny.*

A score at least. 20

*Friar Tuck.*

They've gone home,

Well chastened by the Church. This pastoral staff,  
Mine oaken *Pax Vobiscum*, sent 'em home.

*Robin.* I picture it — those big brown hands of thine —  
Come, Widow Scarlet, come, look not so sad. 25

*Widow Scarlet.* O master, master, they have named  
the day  
For killing of my boy.

---

LINE 4. anon: immediately. 15. bashed: smashed or  
broken. 22. chastened: punished. 23. *Pax Vobiscum*:  
Peace be with you.

## Robin Hood in Sherwood

*Robin*

They have named the day  
For setting of him free, then, my good dame.

Be not afraid. We shall be there, eh, Friar?

*Friar Tuck.*

Thou'lt not be there thyself,

5 My son; the game's too dangerous now, methinks.

*Robin.* I shall be there myself. The game's too good  
To lose. We'll all be there. You're not afraid,  
Marian, to spend a few short hours alone  
Here in the woods with Jenny.

10 *Marian.*

Not for myself,

Robin.

*Robin.* We shall want every hand that day,  
And you'll be safe enough. You know we go  
Disguised as gaping yokels, old blind men,

15 With patches on their eyes, poor wandering beggars:

And when the time is come — a merry blast

Rings out upon a bugle and suddenly

The Sheriff is aware that Sherwood Forest

Has thrust its green boughs up beneath his feet.

20 Off go the cloaks and all is Lincoln green;

And then, good Widow Scarlet,

Back to the cave we come and your good Will

Winds his big arm about you once again;

Go, Friar, take her in and make her cosy.

25 Jenny, your Much will grow three feet at least

With joy to welcome you. He is in the cave.

*(Friar Tuck and Widow Scarlet go towards the cave.)*

*Marian.* But — I still fear.

*Robin.* Come — let us brush these cobwebs from our  
30 minds.

## Robin Hood in Sherwood

Look how the first white star begins to tremble  
Like a big blossom in that sycamore.  
Now you shall hear our forest ritual.  
Ho, Little John! Summon the lads together!

*(The Outlaws come out of the cave. Little John blows a bugle and others come in from the forest.)*

Friar, read us the rules.

<i>Friar Tuck.</i>	First, shall no man	
Presume to call our Robin Hood or any		
By name of earl, lord, baron, knight, or squire,		10
But simply by their names as men and brothers:		
Second, that Lady Marian, while she shares		
Our outlaw life in Sherwood, shall be called		
Simply Maid Marian. Thirdly, we that follow		
Robin shall never in thought or word or deed		15
Do harm to widow, wife, or maid. Fourth, whomsoever		
Ye meet in Sherwood ye shall bring to dine		
With Robin.		
Fifth, you shall never do the poor man wrong,		
Nor spare a usurer. You shall take		20
The waste wealth of the rich to help the poor,		
The naked ye shall clothe, the hungry feed,		
And lastly shall defend with all your power		
All that are trampled under by the world,		
The old, the sick, and all men in distress.		25

*Robin.* So, if it be no dream, we shall at last  
Hasten the kingdom of God's will on earth.

---

LINE 20. **usurer** (ū'zhû-rēr): one who lends money at an illegal rate.

## Robin Hood in Sherwood

There shall be no more talk of rich and poor,  
Norman and Saxon. We shall be one people,  
One family, clustering all with happy hands  
And faces round that glowing hearth, the sun.  
5 Now let the bugle sound a golden challenge  
To the great world. Greenleaf, a forest call!

*(Reynold Greenleaf blows a resounding call.)*

Now let the guards be set; and then, to sleep!  
To-morrow there'll be work enough for all.  
10 The hut for Jenny and Maid Marian!  
Come, you shall see how what we lack in halls  
We find in bowers. Look how from every branch  
Such tapestries as kings could never buy  
Wave in the starlight. You'll be waked at dawn  
15 By feathered choirs whose notes were taught in heaven.  
*Much.* Come, Jenny, come, we must prepare the hut  
For Mistress Marian. Here's a bundle of ferns!

*(They go into the hut. The light is growing dimmer and richer.)*

20 *Little John (handing them in at the door).* And here's a  
red cramoisy cloak, a baron  
Dropt, as he fled one night from Robin Hood;  
And here's a green, and here's a midnight blue,  
All soft as down. But wait, I'll get you more.  
25 *(Two of the Outlaws appear at the door with deerskins.*  
*SHADOW-OF-A-LEAF stands behind them with a great bunch*  
*of flowers and ferns.)*

---

LINE 21. cramoisy (kräm'oi-zī): crimson.



## Robin Hood in Sherwood

*First Outlaw.* Here're fawn-skins, milder than a maiden's cheek.

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf.* Oh, you should talk in rhyme!  
The world should sing  
Just for this once in tune, if Love were king! 5

*Second Outlaw.* Here're deer-skins, for a carpet, smooth  
and meek.

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf.* Ha! ha! Now look at what I  
bring!

*(He throws flowers into the hut, spray by spray, speaking 10  
in a kind of ecstasy.)*

Here's lavender and love and sweet wild thyme,  
And dreams and blue-bells that the fairies chime,  
Here's meadow-sweet and moonlight, bound in posies,  
With ragged robin, traveler's joy and roses, 15  
And here — just three leaves from a weeping willow;  
And here — that's best — deep poppies for your pillow.

*Much.* And here's a pillow that I made myself,  
Stuffed with dry rose-leaves and grey pigeon's down,  
The softest thing on earth except my heart! 20

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf* (*going aside and throwing himself down  
among the ferns to watch*). Just three sweet breaths  
and then the song is flown!

*(Much looks at him for a moment with a puzzled face,  
then turns to the hut again.)* 25

*Much.* Jenny, here, take it — though I'm fond of  
comforts,  
Take it and give it to Maid Marian.

---

LINE 1. **fawn**: a young deer. 12. **thyme**: a fragrant shrub.

## Robin Hood in Sherwood

*Jenny.* Why, Much, 'tis bigger than thyself.

*Much.*

Hush, child.

I meant to use it lengthways. 'Twould have made  
A feather-bed complete for your poor Much,  
5 Take it!

*(The Outlaws all go into the cave.)*

*Marian.* O Robin, what a fairy palace!

How cold and gray the walls of castles seem  
Beside your forest's fragrant halls and bowers.  
10 I do not think that I shall be afraid  
To sleep this night, as I have often been  
Beneath our square bleak battlements.

*Robin.*

And look,

Between the boughs, there is your guard, all night,  
15 That great white star, white as an angel's wings.  
Good-night, sweetheart, good-night!

*Marian.*

Good-night!

*(Marian goes into the hut. The door is shut. Robin goes  
to the mouth of the cave and throws himself down on a couch of  
20 deerskins. The light grows dimly rich and fairy-like.)*

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf (rising to his knees).* Here comes the  
little cloud!

*(A little moonlit cloud comes floating down between the tree-  
tops into the glade. TITANIA is seen reposing upon it. She  
25 steps to earth. The cloud melts away.)*

How blows the wind from fairyland, Titania?

*Titania.* Shadow-of-a-Leaf, the wicked queen has heard  
Your master's plan for saving poor Will Scarlet.  
She knows Maid Marian will be left alone,

## Robin Hood in Sherwood

Unguarded in these woods. The wicked Prince  
Will steal upon her loneliness. He plots  
To carry her away.

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf.* What can we do?  
Can I not break my fairy vows and tell? 5

*Titania.* No, no; you cannot, even if you would,  
Convey our fairy lore to mortal ears.

We can but speak by dreams; and, if you spoke,  
They'd whip you, for your words would all ring false  
Like sweet bells out of tune. 10

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf.* What can we do?

*Titania.* Nothing, except on pain of death, to stay  
The course of Time and Tide. There's Oberon!

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf.* Oberon!

*Titania.* He can tell you more than I. 15

(*Enter OBERON.*)

*Oberon.* Where's Orchis? Where's our fairy trumpe-  
ter

To call the court together?

*Orchis.* Here, my liege. 20

*Oberon.* Bugle them hither; let thy red cheeks puff  
Until thy curled petallic trumpet thrill  
More loudly than a yellow-banded bee  
Thro' all the clover clumps and boughs of thyme.  
They are scattered far abroad. 25

*Orchis.* My liege, it shall  
Outroar the very wasp! (*Exit.*)

---

LINE 7. *lore* : learning; wisdom. 20. *my liege* : my lord  
and sovereign. 22. *petallic trumpet* : a trumpet made of petals  
of flowers.

## Robin Hood in Sherwood

*Oberon (as he speaks, the Fairies come flocking from all sides into the glade).* Methinks they grow

Too fond of feasting. As I passed this way

I saw the fairy halls of hollowed oak

5 All lighted with their pale green glow-worm lamps.

And under great festoons of maiden-hair

Their brilliant mushroom tables groaned with food.

Hundreds of rose-winged fairies banqueted!

All Sherwood glittered with their prisms goblets.

10 *Orchis.* Mighty King,

The Court is all attendant on thy word.

*Oberon (with great dignity).* We are met, this moon-light, for momentous councils

Concerning those two drowsy human lovers,

15 Maid Marian and her outlawed Robin Hood.

They are in dire peril: yet we may not break

Our vows of silence. Many a time

Has Robin Hood by kindly words and deeds

Done in his human world, sent a new breath

20 Of life and joy like Spring to fairyland.

And at the moth-hour of this very dew-fall,

He saved a fairy, whom he thought, poor soul,

Only a may-fly in a spider's web.

*(The Fairies cluster to look at the web, etc.)*

25 *A Fairy.* Can we not make them free  
Of fairyland, like Shadow-of-a-Leaf, to come  
And go, at will, upon the wings of dreams?

---

LINE 9. **prismy** (priz'mī): of varied colors. 13. **momentous**  
**councils**: important consultations.

## Robin Hood in Sherwood

*Oberon.* Not till they lose their wits like Shadow-of-a-Leaf.

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf.* Can I not break my fairy vows and tell?

*Oberon.* Only on pain of what we fairies call 5  
Death!

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf.* Death?

*Oberon.* Never to join our happy revels,  
Never to pass the gates of fairyland  
Again, but die like mortals. What that means 10  
We do not know — who knows?

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf.* If I could save them!  
I am only Shadow-of-a-Leaf!

*Oberon.* There is a King  
Beyond the seas. If he came home in time, 15  
All might be well.

*Titania.* Oh, if the King came home from the Crusade!

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf.* Why will he fight for graves beyond  
the sea?

*Oberon.* Our elfin couriers brought the news at dusk 20  
That Lion-Heart, while wandering home thro' Europe,  
In jet-black armor, like an errant knight,  
Despite the great red cross upon his shield,  
Was captured by some wicked prince and thrust  
Into a dungeon. Only a song, they say, 25  
Can break those prison-bars. There is a minstrel  
That loves his King. If he should roam the world  
Singing until from that dark tower he hears  
The King reply, the King would be set free.

---

LINE 20. *elfin couriers* : fairy messengers. 22. *errant* :  
roving or wandering.

## Robin Hood in Sherwood

*Titania.* Only a song, only a minstrel?

*Oberon.*

Ay;

And Blondel is his name.

*(A long, low sound of wailing is heard in the distance.)*

5 *The Fairies shudder and creep together.)*

*Titania.*

Hark, what is that?

*Oberon.* The cry of the poor, the cry of the oppressed,

The sound of women weeping for their children,

The victims of the forest laws. The moan

10 Of that dark world where mortals live and die

Sweeps like an icy wind thro' fairyland.

*(The wailing sound is heard again in the distance.)*

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf.* To be shut out for ever, only to hear

Those cries! I am only Shadow-of-a-Leaf, the fool,

15 I cannot face it! Is there no hope but this?

No hope for Robin and Maid Marian?

*Oberon.* If the great King comes home from the

Crusade

In time! If not — there is another King

20 Beyond the world, they say.

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf.*

Death, that dark death!

To leave the sunlight and the flowers for ever!

I cannot bear it! Oh, I cannot tell them.

I'll wait — perhaps the great King will come home,

25 If not — Oh, hark, a wandering minstrel's voice?

*Oberon.* Who is drawing hither? Listen, fairies,  
listen!

---

LINE 18. **Crusade**: an expedition undertaken by the Christians in the twelfth century to recover the Holy Land from the Mohammedans.

## Robin Hood in Sherwood

*(Song heard approaching through the wood :)*

Knight on the narrow way,  
Where wouldst thou ride?

"Onward," I heard him say,  
"Love, to thy side!"

5

"Nay," sang a bird above,  
"Stay, for I see  
Death in the mask of love,  
Waiting for thee."

*(The song breaks off. Enter a Minstrel, leading a great white steed. He pauses, confronted by the fairy host. The moonlight dazzles him.)*

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf.* Minstrel, art thou, too, free of fairy-land?

Where wouldst thou ride? What is thy name? 15

*Minstrel.* My name

Is Blondel.

*Shadow-of-a-Leaf.* Blondel!

*The Fairies.* Blondel!

*Minstrel.* And I ride 20

Through all the world to seek and find my King!

*(He passes through the fairy host and goes into the woods on the farther side of the glade, continuing his song, which dies away in the distance.)*

*(Song :)* 25

"Death? What is death?" he cried.

"I must ride on,  
On to my true love's side,  
Up to her throne!"

## Robin Hood in Sherwood

*Titania.* Yet one night more the gates of fairyland  
Are opened by a mortal's kindly deed.

*Oberon.* Last night the gates were shut, and I heard  
weeping!

5 Men, women, children, beat upon the gates  
That guard our happy world. They could not sleep.  
Titania, must not that be terrible,  
When mortals cannot sleep?

*Titania.* Yet one night more  
10 Dear Robin Hood has opened the gates wide  
And their poor weary souls can enter in.

*Oberon.* Yet one night more we woodland elves may  
steal  
Out thro' the gates. I fear the time will come  
15 When they must close for ever; and we no more  
Shall hold our Sherwood revels.

*Titania.* Only love  
And love's kind sacrifice can open them.  
For when a mortal hurts himself to help  
20 Another, then he thrusts the gates wide open  
Between his world and ours.

*Oberon.* Ay, but that's rare,  
That kind of love, Titania, for the gates  
Are almost always closed.

25 *Titania.* Yet one night more!  
Hark, how the fairy host begins to sing  
Within the gates. Wait here and we shall see  
What weary souls by grace of Robin Hood  
This night shall enter Dreamland. See, they come!

30 (*The soft light deepens in the hollow among the ferns  
and the ivory gates of Dreamland are seen swinging open.*)



## Robin Hood in Sherwood

*The fairy host is heard, singing to invite the mortals to enter.)*

*(Song of the Fairies :)*

The Forest shall conquer ! The Forest shall conquer !

The Forest shall conquer !

5

Your world is growing old ;

But a Princess sleeps in the greenwood,

Whose hair is brighter than gold.

The Forest shall conquer ! The Forest shall conquer !

The Forest shall conquer !

10

O hearts that bleed and burn,

Her lips are redder than roses,

Who sleeps in the faëry fern.

The Forest shall conquer ! The Forest shall conquer !

The Forest shall conquer !

15

O hearts that are weary of pain,

Come back to your home in Faerie

And wait till she wakes again.





# TOLD IN A CHINESE GARDEN

BY

CONSTANCE WILCOX

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## CHARACTERS

TAI-LO (tí'lō)	A Gardener on the estate of Wang-Chu-Mo
POA-TING-FANG (bǒw'tēng-fäng)	Guest of Wang-Chu-Mo
WANG-CHU-MO (wäng'jū-mō)	
LI-TI (lē'tē)	Daughter of Wang-Chu-Mo
LING-TAI-TAI (lēng'tī-tī)	Governess to Li-Ti
LANG-TAI-TAI (läng'tī-tī)	Governess to Li-Ti
Two Guards	
Scribe	
Pages, Coolie Runners and Others	

(The Songs are all Old Chinese — and also the quotations.)

(NOTE: In pronouncing these Chinese names, shorten the last syllable to an abrupt, explosive sound.)

# TOLD IN A CHINESE GARDEN

## A STORY IN ONE ACT

*TAI-LO is working with clippers at a flower bed around a goldfish pool in the center of the garden. He wears a peaked straw hat and faded blue jacket and trousers. He sings at his work.*

*Tai-Lo.* "The flower fairies bring  
Their playmate spring;  
But the spring goes  
And leaves the rose.  
She fills all hearts  
With incense and departs. 5 10

"The river fain would keep  
One cloud upon its breast,  
Of the twilight flocks that sweep  
Like red flamingoes fading west,  
Away, away, 15  
To build beyond the day.

"Give me the green gloom of a lofty tree,  
Leaf and bough to shutter and bar

---

LINE 14. **flamingoes** (flà-mǐn'gōz): long-necked, small-bodied birds, of a pink or red color, having very long legs, webbed feet, and long bills.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

My dream of the world that ought to be  
From the drifting ghosts of the things that are;  
Mine is the secret land where spring  
And sunset clouds cease wandering."

5 (POA-TING-FANG and WANG-CHU-MO advance slowly down the path and into the garden. They are in gorgeous embroidered coats and scarlet and black hats with long tassels. A Servant shields them from the sun with a bright, many-colored silk umbrella. They carry fans.)

10 Poa (with a stately wave of his hand as they walk around the pool). As I have frequently observed, a garden is soothing to the eye — the flowers are like the many-colored moving disks of the counting board as they shine in the sun — I was ever fond of a garden in which to prepare my  
15 accounts — so warm, so undisturbed —

Wang. I had learned of your Excellency's preference — and you will find that my daughter Li-Ti — your most subservient wife-to-be — has the history of each flower at her finger tips. I have had her trained four hours every  
20 day in this very garden so she may be able to recite for your Excellency's delectation when she walks her honorable wifely paths in your garden.

Poa. Most erudite and solicitous host and father-in-law-to-be, the sun is no more warm on my back than  
25 your words in my ears. My late brother (may the gods grant him peace in heaven) took delight in his garden, and since I have come into his house and possessions,

---

LINE 13. subservient (sŭb-sŭr'vĭ-ěnt): submissive. 21. delectation (dĕ'lĕk-tā'shŭn): delight. 23. erudite (ěr'ŭo-dīt): learned.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

I have been pleased to add new blooms, one from each country.

*(They come upon the gardener. He bows so low that his sun hat completely hides his face; and, picking up his basket, he goes to a distant flower bed.)*

5

And gardeners — I have thousands — like brown-legged storks — and their wages — they will pick the pennies from my eyelids.

*Wang.* My daughter will have much to learn in your great household, and I have taught her to imbibe silently, 10 and speak not until there are wise words in her mouth. As the Sage says, "A woman with a long tongue is a flight of steps leading to calamity."

*Poa.* Exactly, exactly. Now about the great scarlet bed that is part of your daughter's dowry — may I say 15 that it is of an admirable richness and if there were silken quilts —

*Wang.* There — there are. They are to be carried tonight in the wedding procession on blue lacquered tables of great value — ten coolies it will take to carry 20 them — and the household utensils and camphorwood chests —

*Poa* (*jotting down the items in a notebook*). Excellent, O excellent and generous, O my father-in-law-to-be. It is indeed fortunate that a propitious omen is about to bring 25 our two great houses together. I would welcome your daughter were she as sharp as the vicious Aunt East Wind — which I am sure she is not.

---

LINE 20. coolies : Oriental servants. 25. propitious (prô-pîsh'ûs) : favorable.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Wang.* My daughter is far from ill-favored. But as one has said, "Beauty without the will to —"

*Poa.* It does not matter. It is of an insignificance. I remember, too, "Admirable is the wise woman, but she is an owl." As befitting a man of affairs my wife and I will meet but seldom, and as you say she has the gift of silence. How does the verse go?

10            "The wise man's wisdom is our strength,  
              The woman's wisdom is our bane.  
              The men build up the city walls  
              For women to tear down again."

*Wang.* It rests my ears to hear that you are fond of poetry. Do you know —

15            *Poa.* Ah, I remember the sequence,  
              "No man from any woman's wit  
              Hath yet learned aught of any worth,  
              For wise is she, but unto ill,  
              To bring disorder on the earth.  
              What does she in affairs of state?  
20            Her place is in the inner room.  
              Her wisdom doth least hurt in this,  
              To mind the silkworm and the loom."

But enough of the arts. Were there not perhaps screens?

25 *Wang.* Of purple colored teakwood, set with silver and ivory, and hangings of orange brocade hand painted with dragons.

*Poa.* A good omen — a good omen.

*(They go off slowly talking.)*

---

LINE 24. **teakwood**: the wood of the teak, a plant-like tree.



## Told in a Chinese Garden

(A little Boy in livery enters running. He peers about the garden and runs back to hold aside the shrubbery for a gilded, canopied chair carried by Coolies. In the chair is LI-TI, her scarlet and gold gown stiff with embroidery, and her hair elaborately dressed and twisted with strings of jade and pearl. 5 Long earrings frame a lovely, expressionless face, white with powder and vividly carmine on cheeks and lips. Her eyes are heavily black and droop wearily. She carries a peacock feather fan with a mirror in the handle. Behind the chair walk the two elderly Governesses in drab-colored gowns as 10 unprepossessing as their sharp yellowed faces. They carry rolls of manuscript and a Servant behind holds a bright umbrella over them.)

*The Boy.* The garden is empty, Celestialness; only an under-gardener is here. 15

*Li-Ti (peering out).* My father and Poa-Ting-Fang were just walking through the paths. I wish I might catch a glimpse of them.

*Ling-Tai-Tai.* It is not seemly.

*Lang-Tai-Tai.* It is not in comportment. It is 20 curiosity!

(The little procession advances slowly around the pool.)

*Lang.* The five worst infirmities that afflict the female are indocility, discontent, slander, jealousy, and silliness. The worst of all and the parent of the other five is silli- 25 ness. Your desire to see your honorable husband-to-be is silliness.

---

LINE 7. *carmine*: a rich purple red. 20. *comportment*: behavior. 24. *indocility*: stubbornness.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Ling.* Leave on the knees of the gods the joy of your first sight of him. It comes soon enough.

*(The Bearers set down the chair.)*

*Li-Ti.* I have heard that he is old, and that he poisoned his brother so that he could take his estates, and that his brother's heir ran away from him.

*Ling.* It is incredible that I hear these words in your mouth after our teaching.

*Lang.* Some sprouts do not blossom; some blossoms bear no seed. You are a stranger to us.

*Li-Ti* (*descending from her chair. She is very small and sways on her bound feet*). I am not myself. I am so soon to be some one else — the wife of a man that is old and greedy. I will drink only his will, and eat only his thoughts — he who I know poisoned his brother for money.

*(The Bearers arrange a low stool for Li-Ti and the little Boy holds an umbrella over her. The Governesses take their place standing in front of her and unroll their long yellow scrolls. They also have a Boy to hold their umbrella. The Bearers take off the chair.)*

*Ling.* Servants' chatter. Only girls and servants are hard to train. Draw near to them and they grow unruly; hold them off and they pay you with spite.

*Lang.* Remember that thou art young. What thou dost know is not to be compared with what thou dost not know.

*Li-Ti.* It is common talk. Why then did his brother's only son and heir run away?

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Ling.* Because he was a worthless ne'er-do-well and shamelessly preferred the freedom, as he called it, of vagabondage, to the honorable responsibility of his father's estate. That is common talk also.

*Li-Ti.* Very like he did not care for the responsibility of such an uncle.

*Lang.* It ill fits your mouth to speak thus. If the shiftless Fang-Tai were to return and claim his lands before the allotted time when they legally belong to his uncle, you would not have a round penny as a wife. 10

*Li-Ti.* Then my father would not have me be a wife at all. That would be pleasing.

*Ling.* Undutiful girl! Let us go to our lessons.

*(They unroll the long strips of parchment.)*

*Lang.* Your parent has instructed us to impart one 15 more lesson in the histories of the flowers before you go to your husband to delight him with your knowledge. Recite, I pray you, the complete ancestry of the marigold.

*Li-Ti (in a singsong).* Fathered first by our lord the Sun, whose sevenfold beams falling on the plant wove into 20 curling petals, and then the sweet West Wind in passing from the bazaars of the great spice grove scattered in a pinch of — of — cinnamon —

*Ling.* Fie, fie — a pinch of musk.

*Li-Ti.* A pinch of musk, and Ku-Wu the bee with the 25 golden stripes fashioned for it in the heart of the flower a pouch of tiny petals — so now — so now — Will Poa-Ting-Fang, my future husband, be angry with me? I have forgotten what comes next.

---

LINE 2. **vagabondage** : aimless wandering to and fro.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Ling.* He will rap the tips of your fingers and leave you alone in the pavilion. "So now the musk —"

*Li-Ti.* I do not know. Let us go to the gilly-flower. That is not so hard.

5 (*A Runner enters who goes to the Governesses.*)

*Runner.* The Lord Wang-Chu would confer with you in the inner courtyard on a matter of immediate importance.

*Lang.* We come at once.

10 *Ling* (*thrusting a parchment into Li-Ti's hands*). The list of the flowers is there. Read it well, and remember each in its place.

*Lang.* And there is the song of the willow flowers for the lute. Last time the notes sounded like a mouse on  
15 the strings.

(*Ling and Lang go out with the Runner and their Umbrella Man. The Gardener crosses and begins work on the beds about the pool.*)

*Li-Ti* (*in a very small voice as she strums her lute*).

20 "O willow flowers like flakes of snow,  
Where do your wandering legions go?  
Little we care and less we know!  
Our ways are the ways of the wind —  
Our life in the whirl, and death in the drifts below."

25 (*She turns to her little Umbrella Boy, who stands patiently first on one leg and then on the other.*)

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LINE 3. gilly-flower (jil'í-flo'u'ér): carnation pink. 21. legions: great numbers.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

You twist so that your shadow flickers like a moth in the grass and drives the cadence out of my head. Go over there and rest — I do not mind the sun on my head.

*(He marches over to a far corner, and, curling up on the ground under his umbrella, promptly falls asleep.)* 5

*Li-Ti.* Why do you have so many different kinds of flowers in the garden?

*Tai.* So they will bloom as varied and bright as the hem of your celestial skirt that brushes them as you pass.

*Li-Ti.* I would have all one kind — all gilly-flowers. 10

*Tai.* The garden would be a desert — brown and yellow — deadening to the eye.

*Li-Ti.* I should like it. There would be less to learn.

*Tai.* You know the flower lore and yet would have the heart to turn them out of their homes? 15

*Li-Ti.* Horrid, stiff, prickly things! Take them up and put in gilly-flowers!

*(Tai-Lo kneels with his trowel and puts one or two plants in his basket. Li-Ti runs a finger through her eyelashes.)*

*Li-Ti.* It is not seemly that he should see tears. *(She takes up the parchment.)* The green verbena is the herb that the willow nymph tried to crush into tea for her lover, and the fragrance of her hands — the fragrance of her hands — *(She buries her face in her hands.)*

*Tai (humming at his clipping).* 25

“Prone beside the Western stream,  
In the liliated dusk I dream.  
And mocking me the wind of spring

## Told in a Chinese Garden

Such medley of perfume doth bring,  
I cannot tell what fragrance blows,  
Nor guess the lotus from the rose."

*Li-Ti (standing up and looking across the flower beds).*

5 Who is it sings when I wish to be sad?

*Tai.* It is I — Tai-Lo, the gardener.

*Li-Ti.* You are the gardener? Approach.

*(Tai-Lo comes before her, basket on arm and bows low.)*

*Li-Ti.* "Through the green blinds that shelter me,

10       Two butterflies at play,  
Four wings of flame whirl joyously  
Around me and away,  
While swallows breasting to the shore  
Ripple the waves they wander o'er.  
15       And I that scan the distant view,  
Of torn white clouds and mountains blue —

*Tai (finishing it for her).*

"Lift to the north my aching eyes —

'Tis there — 'Tis there the city lies."

20 *Li-Ti.* You know that, too?

*Tai.* I am an exile. I know another wanderer song  
that might please you. *(He takes the lute.)*

25       "I was a child in Yung-Yang,  
A little child I waved farewell,  
After long years I dwell again  
In world forgotten Yung-Yang.  
Yet I recall my playtime,  
And in my dreams I see

## Told in a Chinese Garden

The little ghosts of Maytime  
Waving farewell to me.

“My father’s house in Yung-Yang  
Has fallen upon evil days,  
No kinsmen o’er the crooked ways 5  
Hail me as once in Yung-Yang.  
No longer stands the old Moot hall,  
Gone is the market from the town.  
The very hills have tumbled down,  
And stoned the valleys in their fall. 10  
Yet I recall my playtime,  
And in my dreams I see  
The little ghosts of Maytime,  
Waving farewell to me.”

*Li-Ti.* Do flowers have ghosts? 15

*Tai (returning to his work).* Yes, they are people.  
Poor little marigold lady! (*He holds up an uprooted plant.*)  
She holds the lanterns of the garden. When the nights are  
dark she lights up the thick green jungle so the katydids  
can dance. 20

*Li-Ti (she consults her paper).* That is not what I  
learned about the marigold. It is much prettier.

*Tai.* Ah, what you know, my lady, is the allegorical  
ancestry, very befitting one of your quality. But this is  
the true story of the flowers that the fairies prick on the 25  
leaves. And the golden cup that the dew king fills for  
the moon fairies. They will go thirsty after their dance  
to-night.

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LINE 23. allegorical ancestry : symbolical, or mythological,  
history.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Li-Ti.* You need not pull up so many. What is the little white flower by your foot?

*Tai.* They are the slippers of the firefly elves left out to dry in the sun, but you mustn't tell any one.

5 *Li-Ti.* And those tall green ones over there?

*Tai.* Hush! Mandarins — see their green caps?

*Li-Ti.* And how solemnly they nod their heads!

*Tai.* And how the bees fly in and out telling them state-secrets.

10 *Li-Ti.* O how dear and funny! (*She peers over towards the high flowers.*) I wonder if the bees' wings tickle their ears — they buzz so — I wonder how it feels to have a bee tell you secrets.

*Tai* (*gravely.*) I can show you. This is the way.  
15 (*He kisses her behind her fan.*) Are you angry, celestial lady?

*Li-Ti.* No — o. It must be rather nice to be a flower.

*Tai.* You are one.

*Li-Ti.* I consider you only as a bee — in the garden.

20 *Tai.* A poor sort of vagabond, accountable to no one — flying in and out — not ever staying long enough to care — or have any one care —

*Li-Ti.* You shall stay and tell me funny stories.

*Tai.* All my poor little bee secrets are yours, lady.

25 *Li-Ti.* And sing songs about — Yung-Yang. O, I wish I had known there was a bee in the garden before!

*Tai.* The bee saw the flower over the wall.

*Li-Ti.* Oh — I should not have been chattering and behaving in this unseemly fashion. Here come my hon-  
30 orable governesses. They will be so displeased if I am

---

LINE 6. **Mandarins** (mǎn'dá-rīnz): Chinese officials.



## Told in a Chinese Garden

not occupied in a fitting manner. Go and send over the umbrella boy. I hope I have not faded in the sun. (*She takes up her lute. The Umbrella Boy returns to stand over her. Tai-Lo goes back to his work.*)

*Li-Ti.* "O willow flowers like flakes of snow, 5  
Where do your wandering legions go?  
Little we care and less we know —"

(*She breaks off in a suppressed giggle that turns into a grave courtesy as the Governesses hurry up. They are out of breath and excited.*) 10

*Ling.* The unheard-of has occurred!

*Lang.* O most unfortunate of girls!

*Ling.* The house of Mo can never smile again.

*Li-Ti.* What is the matter? In what have I offended?

*Ling.* Not you. It is that the great Poa-Ting-Fang, 15  
your future husband-to-be, while walking in this very garden — O wretched landscape — has lost his emerald ring!

*Lang.* It is of the honorable size of a pigeon's egg, and worth the price of a thousand silver mines. 20

*Ling.* More valuable than all your dowry.

*Lang.* It holds in its secret chamber the seal of his house cut from the tomb of his first ancestor —

*Ling.* Never has one of his house been without it!

*Lang.* And it slipped from his august finger while he 25  
picked those miserable flowers!

*Ling.* But that is not the most calamitous! He vows he will depart in anger — that he will never look upon

---

LINE 21. dowry : the property a wife brings to her husband in marriage.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

your face — if his ring is not returned. It is an ill omen and the two houses cannot come together under it.

*Lang.* The garden must be searched to the very seeds, or you will be scorned as a bride and the world will laugh at our rejected house!

*Li-Ti.* It does not appal me — that he will not marry me.

*Lang.* In this garden it vanished — the ring worth sixty diamond mines! It was to be a signet of your marriage. How can he overlook the omen of its loss?

*Ling.* Who has seen it? Who? Who?

*Li-Ti.* There has been no one here but ourselves — and the gardener.

*Lang.* That is it. O merciful heaven that has delivered him into our hands. (*They approach Tai-Lo, who bows. Li-Ti wanders about looking in the beds.*)

*Ling.* Your name?

*Tai.* Tai-Lo.

*Lang.* How long have you been here, and why did you come?

*Tai.* I have been gardener among your honorable flowers for twice seven days.

(*Li-Ti stops to pick up something that glitters as she turns it in her hand.*)

*Ling.* And before?

*Tai.* I wandered.

*Lang.* Ah!

*Ling.* And your reason for coming?

*Tai* (*watching Li-Ti as she stands in the sunlight*). I liked the flowers in your garden.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

Ling. And you found them what you expected?

Tai. Better, excellencies. (*He bows.*)

(*With a furtive motion Li-Ti crouches down and buries what she has found deep in the soft earth Tai-Lo spaded up.*)

Ling. Enough! Seize him!

5

Lang. "A flaw can be ground from a scepter white —  
A slip of the tongue no man right."

Ling. I am satisfied. "Unruly when young — un-  
mentioned as man, undying when old — spells good-for-  
nothing."

10

Li-Ti (*coming between them*). No!

Lang. Your chair waits. In a moment your honorable  
father and the wronged Ting-Fang will be here to search  
the garden — and the gardener.

Li-Ti. Untie him. He has not seen the ring.

15

Ling. We shall see —

Lang. What we shall see.

Tai. There are ways of proving that I have not the ring.

Li-Ti (*she has ascended her chair. She twists her hands nervously*). I — I — (*She looks at Tai.*) I will see that  
you are not found guilty.

Tai. Graciousness! "Richer the silver of your voice  
than in the hollow pojols that make moonlight about  
your ankles."

Ling. "Honeyed words confound goodness."

25

Lang. "The vulgar always gloss their faults."

Ling. Forward!

(*The Bearers carry off the chair, followed by the Governesses under their umbrella. A Man stays to guard Tai-Lo.*)

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LINE 23. pojols : ankle bracelets.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Man.* Where did you hide it?

*Tai.* What?

*Man.* The ring.

*Tai.* I have not seen it.

5 *Man.* I will take it safely out of the garden and we will go shares.

*Tai.* I tell you I have not seen it. It is fortunate for your master that I am gardener here instead of you.

*Man.* Do you think I can believe you such a fool that  
10 you were working here on the very bed under his foot when the ring slipped from his finger and did not put your hand over it? Bah! Tell me where it is or I'll swear I saw you swallow it!

*Tai.* The only kind of fool I am not, is to tell anything  
15 to such a dirty knave as you.

*Man* (*imperturbably*). Everything you say will be used against you.

*Tai.* I have no doubt. "Trees are more upright than men."

20 *Man.* "Money makes a blind man see."

(WANG-CHU-MO and POA-TING-FANG, under their umbrellas, come into the garden. They are followed by Servants with rakes.)

*Wang* (*directing the men*). Barely touch the surface of  
25 the earth — the slightest scratch may bury the ring beneath it as you work. And remember: you are held responsible if we fail. Oh, my honorable guest — and son-in-law that I hope you shall still be — would I could heap the unworthy dust of this garden on my head in  
30 apology.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Fang.* It is indeed a calamity of unmitigated enormity. My ancestral jewel is of the size of a pigeon's egg and of the value of a thousand silver mines. (*He consults notebook.*) Whereas your daughter's dowry, I regret to say, does not possess its equivalent. 5

*Wang.* Its equivalent shall be found. Where is the gardener Lang-Tai-Tai told me of?

*Tai-Lo.* Here.

(*Tai-Lo and Poa-Ting-Fang stare at each other.*)

*Wang.* O wretched stork, what have you filched with 10 your beak!

*Poa.* I would question this man — alone.

(*Wang goes off, fussily directing the men who scratch the flower beds with their rakes.*)

*Poa.* Fang-Tai! 15

*Tai.* My estimable uncle!

*Poa.* What are you doing here?

*Tai.* I might better ask the same — what are *you* doing here — in my father's coat, and wearing — or, rather, being very careless, with my father's signet ring — while 20 I, my father's heir, am still in a position to claim them? But I fear the question might inconvenience you —

*Poa.* Very unsuitable.

*Tai.* We will let it pass since it is of my own free will that I wander. Be benign enough to assure these people 25 that I am no thief and I say nothing.

*Poa.* And how long do you continue saying nothing?

---

LINE 1. **unmitigated** (ün-mīt'i-gāt'ěd): not softened or lessened. 10. **filched**: stolen. 25. **benign** (bē-nīn'): kind; generous.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Tai.* As long as my good pleasure and your good behavior.

*Poa.* Am I to be at the beck and call and in constant fear of a paltry vagabond? Oh, my high-bred sensibilities! I shudder to my finger tips!

*Tai.* Most unsuitable of you, dear uncle. When my father died I chose some years of freedom to wander through the by-roads unhampered — and left you the freedom and the care of the estate. It was my favor that  
10 gave you these honors. It is not my fault if you assume too much — take too much — and force me to return.

*Poa.* That was why you stole the ring — so that you could prove your estate instantly!

*Tai.* Your morals, my uncle, are odd. I take no such  
15 method.

*Poa.* Bah! Hypocrisy!

*Tai.* I have seen that which makes me think I shall return in any case.

*Poa.* Am I to give up my position — my hard-fought  
20 gains — my improvements won by the sweat of my toil and the clink of my gold —

*Tai.* My gold.

*Poa.* To give place to you — you — a vagabond squanderer — a shiftless pleasure lover — who would waste  
25 and change and turn me into the laughing stock of the country?

*Tai.* No doubt.

*Poa.* It is unthinkable — that I — I should have to give way to a beardless ne'er-do-well. It is a thousand  
30 deaths! And I would give a thousand rings to have you dead, scourge of the worthy!

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Tai.* No doubt.

*Poa.* You mock me — will you — monkey-eared frog — you —

*Tai.* Tell these people that I am no thief, and have done.

5

*Poa.* They would not believe it.

*Tai.* I have around my neck the amulet, the duplicate of the sacred amulet in my father's ring. They will believe Tai-Fang.

*Poa.* You cannot prove a grain of it. The amulet of a 10 ragged gardener. It might be any stone.

*Tai.* The ring will be found and it fits there.

*Poa.* I will throw the ring into the river before it is opened. I will grind it under my heel —

*Tai.* "The chase of gain is rich in hate —" My uncle, 15 do you think there is a man on our estate who would not know me?

*Poa.* But here — here they do not, and the word of a vagrant servant is the wind in the grass — empty. Whether the ring is found or not, I will say you confessed 20 to stealing it. They will be only too eager to string you on the nearest branch to appease me. And what is one dead gardener more or less? By the sacred gods that guard the cornice of our house, I will do it — unless you swear to go and never molest me again. You swear? 25

*Tai.* I do not.

*Poa.* There will be trial and court in this very garden and you will be hanged.

*Tai.* If it happens that I am not, it will fare hard with

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LINE 7. amulet (ǎm'û-lět): charm against evil. 24. cornice: a projection at the top of a wall.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

you. How well I see now that "Gold is tested by fire and man by gold."

~ *Poa*. You will never go out of that gate unless, when the rope is about your neck, you promise me on the grave of your ancestors —

*Tai*. You old thief! I'll see you strangled first! (*He tries to free his hands.*)

*Poa* (*calling*). My honorable father-in-law. This man is violent!

10 (*WANG hurries up.*)

*Wang*. He confesses?

*Poa*. To having disposed of the ring. My astute questioning —

*Tai*. I do not.

15 *Wang*. Peace! Lest your tongue burn in your mouth.

*Poa*. My intricate insinuations and subtle probes have brought the taste of guilt to his trembling mouth.

*Tai*. You lie! My Lord Wang, if you know —

*Wang* (*angrily*). I am about to know.

20 *Poa*. He admits to having taken the jewel but as to where he has hid it, he has the cunning and secrecy of the weasel.

*Wang*. We will discover at once. O that I should have nourished such a viper in my garden!

25 *Poa*. Eating your bread and lining his unworthy pockets with your silver. My unhappy friend, I indeed grieve for you.

*Wang*. It can be crushed out. Tread on the snake's head, and he will not bite.

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LINE 12. astute : shrewd; critical.



## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Poa.* I truly believe that nothing would give me greater happiness than to see your garden spot cleared of all evil.

*Wang.* O most felicitous and generous guest! Truly "to rank the effort above the prize may be called Love." It shall be cleared of Evil —

5

*Tai.* One moment.

*Wang.* Your time to speak shall come.

*Poa.* He should have only one moment. I am sincerely convinced that such is my friendship for you that immediate removal of this rascal — since he has in part <sup>10</sup> confessed — would greatly tend to smooth my pride in the matter of the ring — and my feeling towards your daughter —

*Wang.* We will hold a court at once.

*Poa.* Is that necessary, in a case of such confessed <sup>15</sup> guilt?

*Wang* (*pompously*). "When not in office I discuss not policy." I perform no deed that is not strictly in accordance with the mandates of the law — "Gentlemen cherish worth; the vulgar cherish dirt. Gentlemen trust in justice; the vulgar trust in favor," says Confucius. But <sup>20</sup> this will be very summary — just a few ceremonies in this garden — we will not disturb the festivities outside.

*Poa.* Most laudable intention. But no strangers I pray — no fuss — no scandal; of all things I deplore scandal — and were there outsiders I would feel it my painful <sup>25</sup> duty to explain — my emerald seal —

*Wang.* No one but ourselves — and the men in this garden — to act also as executioners in case —

---

LINE 3. *felicitous* (fê-lîs'î-tîs): happy. 22. *summary*: performed without delay.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Poa.* Exactly and excellently planned. Worthy father-in-law, your scheme is as neat as a snail in its shell.

*Tai.* I claim the right to defendants.

~ *Wang* (*pointing to the two Guards*). These can be your  
5 defendants. They are your fellow servants and know the most about you here.

*Poa.* Precise as a crab in its skin.

*Tai.* Some one from my own province —

*Poa.* Question not ~~your~~ master's generosity, wretched  
10 fellow. Your past is best buried in obscurity.

*Wang.* Unhappy man, the crime was committed here. Who more fitting than these witnesses?

*Poa.* My father-in-law, the tea-leaf eyelids of the Sages would quiver at your perfect comprehension and justice.

15 *Tai.* You will regret this.

*Poa.* Very like. I am tender-hearted and ever hate to witness suffering.

*Wang.* I depart to seek the law books. "To foster right among the people — to honor the ghosts of the  
20 dead while keeping aloof from them may be called Wisdom."

*Poa.* For a theft of over a thousand gold pieces it is hanging, is it not? My ring was worth twenty thousand.

*Wang.* That is the penalty.

25 *Poa.* And that this should defile your garden! In my grief for you I feel sorrow and desire for my ring passing away. Is it not dangerous to leave these men with the prisoner? He might confer falsely or even divulge the hiding place of the ring, and they escape.

30 *Wang.* True. Is he well tied?

*Guard.* Perfectly.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*(Tai-Lo is roped hand and foot.)*

*Wang.* He is as safe there as a clipped sparrow, and we will guard the gates. Come, men, you will be allowed to confer with the prisoner for his defense under our eyes. Ah, if all would hark to the words of the Sage — “Living 5 on coarse rice and water with a bent arm for pillow, mirth may be ours, but ill-begotten wealth and honors are to me a wandering cloud.”

*Poa.* We are not all born with the righteousness of Confucius in our breath as you are, my esteemed father-in- 10 law-to-be.

*(They walk out slowly.)*

*Guard (in Tai-Lo's ear).* Tell me where it is — that ring —

*Tai.* You knave!

*Guard.* Remember then — by Kong-Fu-Tsu, I'll say 15 you swallowed it, and then — (*He makes the motion of ripping open Tai's body with a knife.*) It is not pleasant even with a sharp knife — and I doubt if they wait to hang you first. 20

*Wang (calling).* Come here, you loiterers!

*Guard.* I was but tightening the ropes.

*(The Guards go out. LI-TI enters on tip-toe. She sways, and advances very slowly. Suddenly, very swiftly, she stoops and feels in a flower bed. Tai-Lo whistles a little tune.)* 25

*Li-Ti (her hands behind her).* You are spying on me! Oh!

*Tai.* If you move your celestial path to another circle, I cannot see you.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Li-Ti.* Oh, poor gardener — you are bound! Does it hurt?

*Tai.* A little, but not so much as that you should see me so.

5 *Li-Ti.* You do look funny! Ah, I did not mean that — I will see that you are unbound. I want to hear you talk again. I hate to see you so. Can't you move?

*Tai.* My position is honorably uncomfortable. Your august father is pleased to accuse me of taking your estimable husband-to-be's ring.

*Li-Ti.* But you did not. They were estimably in the wrong.

*Tai.* You believe I did not steal? Your words are as sweet as the song of the wonder-birds.

15 *Li-Ti.* Would it free you if the ring were found? If the emerald the size of a pigeon's egg and the value of sixty pagodas of pearl were to be spaded up in this flower-bed?

*Tai.* I am afraid not.

20 *Li-Ti.* It would not matter?

*Tai.* You are pleased?

*Li-Ti.* Oh, it is only a little matter — something to do with myself, and not at all important as your troubles are. It is only that if the ring were not found, I heard it said  
25 that Poa-Ting-Fang — my husband-to-be — would look upon me with frowning, and not take me to his house, but go away.

*Tai.* You do not want to marry him?

---

LINE 17. **pagodas** (pà-gō'dáz): towerlike temples in India, China, and Japan.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Li-Ti.* I have heard that he is old and ugly and stupid, and likes dry things to learn by rote instead of — of knowing nice pretty flower stories such as —

*Tai.* As I know?

*Li-Ti.* Yes. But I must not take up all the time with <sup>5</sup> this idle chatter of my affairs. There must be found a way to free you and then the ring will never be found. Oh, I would stamp it to pieces myself rather than that, and I would never have to learn any more stupid lists for Ting-Fang — only funny flower stories here in the <sup>10</sup> garden with you, and we would be so happy and carefree. Wouldn't we?

*Tai.* It would be as a thousand springtimes. I wish it were possible.

*Li-Ti.* Why not? 15

*Tai.* You yourself have poured water on the last spark of hope.

*Li-Ti.* You think the ring could free you after all?

*Tai.* If anything. But speak not of that.

*Li-Ti.* I must (*in a very faint voice*); and the ring shall <sup>20</sup> be found.

*Tai.* I hope not, for your honorable sake. You will stay in the garden and talk to the bright lilies, and all the wicked lacquered goblins on the cornice of the house of Ting-Fang shall wriggle their fire-colored tongues in vain, <sup>25</sup> for they shall not have you to eat.

*Li-Ti.* But I should not like it if you were not here.

*Tai.* You think so? To-night even in the great citron light of sunset when the Three Councilors open their cold bright eyes in the northern sky, you will have for- <sup>30</sup> gotten.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Li-Ti.* No! Your ghost would come to me.

*Tai.* Do not fear for me. "Those who have not tasted the bitterest of Life's bitters can never appreciate the sweetest of Life's sweets." And even if the emerald should be found growing like a celestial magic leaf upon these flower stems, there are those to say I hid it, and that is theft confessed.

*Li-Ti.* But if some one else were to say he took it?

*Tai.* O jewel in the lotus, do you think others wait to hang in my stead?

*Li-Ti (slowly).* I could not live, and think that I had harmed you.

*Tai.* That is very kind.

*Li-Ti.* You do not believe me? It is true!

15 *Tai.* Did you not just say, Almond Flower, that it was your happiness for the ring not to be found? That is proof.

*Li-Ti.* When I think of going with that dreadful old man, it is like holding my hand in a crab's tooth. But a way will be found to free you. It must.

*Tai.* To argue with you, little one, is like throwing water in a frog's face.

*Li-Ti.* Oh, you are so funny! Have I a face like a frog?

*Tai.* More like a lotus petal.

25 *Li-Ti.* Ah, I cannot bear it! I must tell you — it is a secret —

*Tai.* Tell me. The dead have no tongues to wag.

*Li-Ti.* Don't say it! Tai-Lo, you are not going to die!

*Tai.* That is nonsense. What is your secret?

30 *Li-Ti.* It is that I — Oh, I dare not — I cannot —  
(*She hides her face behind her fan.*)

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Tai.* Your esteemed father and his honorable guest your husband-to-be are approaching. It would not be seemly that they find you in converse with a prisoner.

*Li-Ti (looking up steadily over her fan).* Good-by, Tai-Lo.

5

*Tai.* Good-by.

*(Li-Ti vanishes in the bushes. WANG-CHU-MO and POA-TING-FANG enter, followed by Servants bearing two high gilded chairs. Two others carry parasols, and another books, papers, and a long quill pen. One man has a heavy rope slung over his arm. At a reasonable distance the two Governesses follow, whispering importantly under their umbrella. The Bearers put down the chairs and Wang and Poa ascend them, the umbrellas being held over their heads. A Scribe sits cross-legged at their feet, with his materials spread before him. The Governesses stand behind Wang's chair, and the Servants in a row behind Poa's. Wang motions for Tai-Lo to be unbound. He comes to stand in front of the chairs.)*

*Wang (reading from a book).* "To leave untaught and then kill is cruelty; to ask full tale without warning is tyranny. To give careless orders and be strict when the day comes is robbery; to be stingy in rewarding men is littleness." Court is open. This man is accused of a theft surpassing the mark of ten thousand gold pieces. I being judge of this province may acquit him, or find him guilty. If he is found guilty, he may be hanged.

*Poa (fanning himself).* Most suitable, most suitable.

*Wang.* Who stands against this man?

*Poa (rising).* I do.

30

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*(Several of the Servants bow, and the Governesses come forward timidly.)*

Wang (*speaking to the Scribe*). Put down the names.

Poa. Of us all —

5 Wang. Yes, all except those two. (*He points to the two Guards of Tai-Lo.*) They are to speak for the prisoner.

Poa (*coldly*). Ah, those. (*He leans over to them.*) Merely technical, my men, I assure you. There will be no penalty attached for you if your — ah — client — is found  
10 guilty.

Tai. I will speak for myself.

Guard (*in his ear*). And what have you to say to me?

Tai. That you can go to the devil.

*(The Guard whispers vindictively.)*

15 Tai. You blackguard! (*He falls on the man, half knocking him down, and is pulled back by the other Guard. Wang and Poa both rise. The Governesses scream.*)

Wang (*shrilly*). Stop it there! How dare you, vagrant beetle that you are, interrupt and insult the honor of the  
20 court before my eyes! Oh, lamentable viciousness!

Poa. Scandalous!

Wang (*sinking back in his chair, the Guards having pulled Tai-Lo back*). An execrable beginning.

Poa. Contemptible. To maul his very fellow defend-  
25 ant!

Tai. It is not as you think, Lord Wang; if you will hear me, this man —

Poa. Out of order. (*Fanning*) Tales, tales.

Wang. Out of order, certainly! and there is nothing to

---

LINE 23. execrable (ěk'sê-kra-b'l): detestable; wretched.



## Told in a Chinese Garden

excuse your incredible actions. "The people are the root of a country; if the root is firm, the country will be tranquil; if the root is rotten, the country breaks like a house with a cracked floor."

*Guard.* I refuse to answer for this man. I want to 5  
accuse him —

*Poa.* Very proper spirit, very proper.

*Guard.* I can tell you —

*Wang.* All in appropriate time. Put his name down there. (*He raps sharply on the arm of his chair with his 10 fan.*) Proceed! We will omit the formalities and come to the accusations.

*Scribe* (*reading from his papers in a high singsong*). The gardener, Tai-Lo, is accused of theft in the third degree of —

15

*Poa.* Time presses.

*Wang.* Come to the list of evidence.

*Scribe.* First: He was known to be alone in the garden when the great and honorable Lord Poa-Ting-Fang lost his most precious emerald ring — clear as the sunset after 20 rain — of the size of a pigeon's egg — and the value of ten thousand silver mines. He was seen to work under the very feet of the great Poa-Ting-Fang as the ring slipped from his finger —

*Tai.* If he knew when it fell, why did he not pick it up? 25

*Wang.* Again, silence.

*Poa.* Note that down — if he knew — if he knew.  
(*Making a note in his book*)

*Scribe.* Second: He confessed openly to have been a wandering beggar and questionable character before his 30 entering as a gardener only a few days before the notable

## Told in a Chinese Garden

Poa-Ting-Fang was due for a visit, and he admitted in the access of his unworthy triumph that he had found the gleanings of the garden even more than he had expected.

*Ling.* That we found out —

5 *Lang.* He admitted it to us.

*Poa.* Most admirable example of female intelligence!

*Ling (to Lang, as they settle back).* "A man thinks he knows, but a woman knows better."

*Scribe.* Third: The guilty one is known to have confessed to taking the ring — into the august ear of Poa-Ting-Fang himself.

*Poa.* Is that not sufficient?

*Scribe.* Though, being as a weasel in his ways, he will not confess where he has hid away the jewel. (*He rolls*  
15 *up his paper, and sits down.*)

*Tai.* Poa-Ting-Fang has made my confession incomplete because he does not know any more than I do where the ring is.

*Poa.* Does the court permit this slander on my person?

20 *Wang.* We will hear the man though his ridiculous insinuations are hardly worth the attentions of our august ear. "But he who contains himself goes seldom wrong," says the wise man. We will listen though it be wind in our ears.

25 *Poa.* "Politeness before force."

*Tai.* I have not seen the ring.

*Poa.* That is an — ah — inaccuracy. The person has seen the jewel on this very hand, flashing in the sun before his greedy eyes — as I walked in the garden. Could any  
30 one have overlooked the sacred emerald of the house of Fang? Of the value of five hundred Ming vases all

## Told in a Chinese Garden

fragile as the wings of a moth? His statement is worthless.

*Tai.* Yes, my uncle, my esteemed and proud relative, I have seen the ring — on my father's finger it was — my father — whose estates you will steal to your own ends —<sup>5</sup> seen it with my eyes — the eyes of Fang-Tai — my father's son.

*Poa.* His guilt has gone to his head Too bad, too bad. "Memory makes dizzy his thought like the perfume of some venomous flower."<sup>10</sup>

*Wang.* What proof have you for this monstrous impertinence?

*Tai.* "When a bird is to die his note is sad, when a man is to die, his words are true." Do you deny that I am your nephew, Lord Ting-Fang?<sup>15</sup>

*Poa.* Most certainly. My Lord Wang-Mo, do you permit this man to question whether I know my own nephew? Indeed "if the tongue have no fear, words are hard to make good."

*Wang.* Consider which way your tongue goes. How<sup>20</sup> can you utter such an assertion?

*Poa.* "The charioteer of Resolve has lost control of the wild team of Fancy."

*Governesses (behind their fans).* Very pretty — very pretty.<sup>25</sup>

*(Poa smiles indulgently.)*

*Tai (holding out an amulet that is on a string about his neck).* I have here the perfect duplicate of the sacred amulet of the house of Fang, the secret seal of our ancestors, given only to the first sons of our house.<sup>30</sup>

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Poa.* Very unlikely.

*Tai.* And any man from our province would know me — I can tell you the secret and inmost furnishings of our palace —

5 *Poa.* The man must have a whole band of accomplices to lie for him.

*Governesses.* "Evil is not hermit. It has ever neighbors."

*Poa.* Exact and just.

10 *Tai.* Do you deny, *Poa-Ting-Fang*, that in the hidden corner of your chamber —

*Poa.* Whose word is to be taken — this vagabond's or mine? Are my household gods to be dragged out and shamed before the whole countryside — and in the mouth  
15 of every lying rascal? I have said that he is a thief. My word is used as carelessly as a lead penny. (*He rises.*) This court shall keep me no longer. I will go forth, and say that it is no court.

*Wang.* My most exalted guest, your word is as valuable  
20 as a ruby. Into a court are sifted both chaff and grain. We must winnow all. Be satisfied that the affair will be settled here — and take it no further.

(*Poa seats himself.*)

*Poa (sulkily).* "Long visits make short compliments."

25 *Wang.* You have an amulet?

*Poa.* Like most gardeners — apes are we all.

*Governesses.* Yes, yes, apes.

*Wang.* Speak slowly — and take heed of your words —

---

LINE 5. *accomplices* : associates in guilt.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

concerning it. The offense is great. How can you prove your assertion here and now?

*Tai.* The amulet is cut so cunningly that it fits into a hidden part of the ring of our house.

*Poa.* And the ring is lost! Very neat, very neat. 5

*Wang.* You testify to your own guilt.

*Tai.* I dare you to find the ring, Poa-Ting-Fang.

*Guard.* He can't do it! He can't do it!

*Wang.* Why not?

*Guard (pointing to Tai-Lo).* Because he's swallowed it! 10

*All.* Swallowed it!

*Tai.* That — that is too absurd!

*Guard (vindictively).* When he knew he was caught — he did it — to hide his guilt —

*Tai.* And how do you prove that? 15

*Guard (significantly).* There is one way to prove it — quick and sure.

*Wang.* This is most distressing!

*Poa.* Most shocking to my delicate sensibilities —

*Guard.* Will you hang him first? My Lord, does such 20  
a liar deserve it?

*Poa.* Perhaps the guard is right — and since the man claims to exalted ancestry, however knavish his assertions, that is a more — ah — aristocratic way of — ah committing suicide. But, oh, my tender perceptions. 25

*Wang.* I must complete my duty and the law.

*Guard (delightedly producing a knife in one hand and a rope in the other).* Have I your august permission to —

*(The bushes part suddenly and Li-Ti appears.)*

*Li-Ti (shrilly).* No!

30

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Wang.* My daughter!

*Poa.* My future bride! (*He modestly hides his face behind his fan.*)

*Wang.* This is the culmination of unseemliness!  
5 Unhappy girl!

*Li-Ti* (*prostrating herself*). I will walk in obedience all my life. I will be faithful and light lanterns before all the household gods, and obey your slightest eyelid quiver as your most subservient and unworthy wife, my Lord Ting-  
10 Fang, but I cannot live and know that such a crime was done in my name.

*Wang.* In your name?

*Li-Ti.* Oh, a thousand pardons, most august and best of fathers — ten thousand, O most exalted husband-to-be  
15 — but I with my miserable eyes had never beheld the countenance of my Lord Ting-Fang — and knew that he could care naught for one so lowly as I — and I found — O, a million apologies, most celestial ones — that my unworthy heart was not with him — that it lay in the hand  
20 of another — and when I heard — from all mouths that my Lord Ting-Fang would not have me if his ring were not found — I thought only of myself in my unhappiness — and I saw the ring where it lay fallen in our most unworthy garden, slipped from his august finger — and I  
25 stole it.

*Wang.* You!

*Li-Ti.* Yes. Cover me with a thousand confusions. Bury me forever in the cold cells of the sacred Pagoda. But do not harm Tai-Lo. (*She holds out her hand.*) Here  
30 it is.

*Poa* (*coming suddenly down from his chair*). Let me see.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Tai* (forestalling him, and covering the ring with his hand).  
No.

*Ling* (catching a sleeve of *Li-Ti* and pulling her back).  
Little spider — is this how you reward our teaching!

*Lang* (pulling her by the other sleeve). “The five worst 5  
infirmities that afflict women are —”

*Wang*. Peace.

*Tai*. Behold, my Lord Wang. (He holds the ring and  
his amulet together in his hand.)

*Wang*. Complete. How strange indeed are the gods! 10

*Tai*. There will now be time to prove more —

*Poa* (with a majestic wave of his hand). My worthy and  
honorable Lord Wang-Chu-Mo, and others that are here,  
I admit that this person is unfortunately my nephew. I  
admit that I denied him before you. I admit that I would 15  
rather have my tender, high-strung sensibilities racked  
to their core as they would have been by the shedding of  
my own flesh and blood and the thrice regrettable demise  
of my unfortunate nephew than to have the lands of my  
ancestors ravaged and the gods of my household profaned 20  
by falling into the hands of a profligate and a waster.  
But through the interruption of, I may say with a blush,  
your unmaidenly daughter, all this cannot be. But the  
hem of my skirt will be clear of it from now on. I resign  
my lands into the hands of this rascal, preferring that they 25  
perish quickly and without the open scandal of a lawsuit  
with such as he. And you, Wang-Mo, I congratulate  
you that you have not had the inconvenience of having  
your daughter returned to you, as she surely must have

---

LINE 18. demise (dě-mīz'): death. 21. profligate (prōf'li-  
gât): worthless one.

## Told in a Chinese Garden

been had I seen her in my house. I leave her to my nephew. I fear they are only too well suited to each other. I have the pleasure of bidding you an honorable farewell. And try, I beg you, though I fear it will be difficult, to remember that "A gentleman is consistent and changeless and a combination of art and nature well blent."

*(He moves off with great dignity, signing to a man to follow him with an umbrella. All bow.)*

Wang. Alas! Like the famous man, "He wears a mask  
10 of love but his deeds belie it."

Ling. Such a splendid creature!

Lang. Like the full moon his face, with eyebrows like swallows' wings —

Tai. My uncle has always dignity and discretion.

15 Wang. Completely polite.

*(Poa-Ting-Fang disappears.)*

Tai. May I have the honor of suggesting that I am now as my uncle — though undoubtedly somewhat less august and complete in my gifts — and stand in the most exalted  
20 shoes of your son-in-law-to-be?

Wang. I will consult the law upon that most desirable point. My garden is yours, and my house — and all that I have.

*(He goes off slowly, followed by the Scribe, chair, and the  
25 others. All bow deeply.)*

Tai (to Li-Ti). So that was your secret?

Li-Ti (prostrating herself). Oh, most honorable lord, forgive my boldness.



## Told in a Chinese Garden

*Tai (lifting her to him).* You would have sacrificed yourself so no harm should come to me. It gives faith to a poor vagabond to take up the works of his ancestors again.

*(The Bearers come back with Li-Ti's chair. She ascends it.)*

5

*Tai.* I shall remember that the first day I saw you was the birthday of a thousand flowers, and each succeeding day will be the unfolding of a new petal.

*Li-Ti.* Oh, most honorable one! I will have no more secrets from you — I will tell you all.

10

*Tai.* In a garden — where there are plenty of bees. *(He bows. The Bearers carry off her chair. Ling and Lang follow. As the chair reaches the opposite end of the pool Li-Ti leans out and throws him a kiss. Tai-Lo follows them out slowly, humming the same tune as when he first came* 15 *into the garden.)*



# SPREADING THE NEWS

BY

LADY GREGORY

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## CHARACTERS

BARTLEY FALLON	JAMES RYAN
MRS. FALLON	MRS. TARPEY
JACK SMITH	MRS. TULLY
SHAWN EARLY	JO MULDOON, a policeman
TIM CASEY	A Removable Magistrate

## SPREADING THE NEWS

SCENE: — *The outskirts of a fair. An apple stall.*  
MRS. TARPEY *sitting at it.*

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Bad luck to Jo Muldoon, knocking my apples this way and that way. (*Begins arranging them.*)  
Showing off he was to the new magistrate. 5

(*Enter BARTLEY FALLON and MRS. FALLON.*)

*Bartley.* Indeed it's a poor country and a scarce country to be living in. But I'm thinking if I went to America it's long ago the day I'd be dead!

*Mrs. Fallon.* So you might, indeed. 10

(*She puts her basket on a barrel and begins putting parcels in it, taking them from under her cloak.*)

*Bartley.* And it's a great expense for a poor man to be buried in America.

*Mrs. Fallon.* Never fear, Bartley Fallon, but I'll give 15 you a good burying the day you'll die. Leave off talking of dying. It might be twenty years you'll be living yet.

*Bartley (with a deep sigh).* I'm thinking if I'll be living at the end of twenty years, it's a very old man I'll be then!

*Mrs. Tarpey (turns and sees them).* Good-morrow, 20  
Bartley Fallon; good-morrow, Mrs. Fallon. Well, Bartley,

---

LINE 5. **magistrate** : one having public authority.

## Spreading the News

you'll find no cause for complaining to-day; they are all saying it was a good fair.

*Bartley (raising his voice).* It was not a good fair, Mrs. Tarpey. It was a scattered sort of a fair. If we didn't expect more, we got less. That's the way with me always: whatever I have to sell goes down and whatever I have to buy goes up. If there's ever any misfortune coming to this world, it's on myself it pitches, like a flock of crows on seed potatoes.

10 *Mrs. Fallon.* Leave off talking of misfortunes, and listen to Jack Smith that is coming the way, and he singing.  
(*Voice of Jack Smith heard singing:*)

I thought, my first love,  
There'd be but one house between you and me,  
15 And I thought I would find  
Yourself coaxing my child on your knee.  
Over the tide  
I would leap with the leap of a swan,  
Till I came to the side  
20 Of the wife of the red-haired man!

(*JACK SMITH comes in; he is a red-haired man, and is carrying a hayfork.*)

*Mrs. Tarpey.* That should be a good song if I had my hearing.

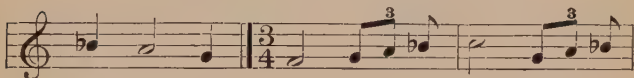
25 *Mrs. Fallon (shouting).* It's "The Red-haired Man's Wife."

*Mrs. Tarpey.* I know it well. (*She turns her back to them and goes on arranging her apples.*)

# THE RED-HAIRED MAN'S WIFE



I thought, my first love, There'd be but



one house be - tween you and me, And I



thought I . . would find Your -



self coax - ing my child on your



knee. O - ver the tide I would



leap with the leap of a swan, Till I



came to . . the . . side .



Of the wife of the red-haired man!

## Spreading the News

*Mrs. Fallon.* Where's herself, Jack Smith?

*Jack Smith.* She was delayed with her washing; bleaching the clothes on the hedge she is, and she daren't leave them, with all the tinkers that do be passing to the fair. 5 It isn't to the fair I came myself, but up to the Five-Acre Meadow I'm going, where I have a contract for the hay. We'll get a share of it into tramps to-day. (*He lays down hayfork and lights his pipe.*)

*Bartley.* You will ~~not~~ get it into tramps to-day. The 10 rain will be down on it by evening, and on myself too. Its seldom I ever started on a journey but the rain would come down on me before I'd find any place of shelter.

*Jack Smith.* If it didn't itself, Bartley, it is my belief you would carry a leaky pail on your head in place of a hat, 15 the way you'd not be without some cause of complaining. (*He goes out, leaving his hayfork.*)

*Mrs. Fallon.* It's time for ourselves to be going home. I have all I bought put in the basket. Look at there, Jack Smith's hayfork he left after him! He'll be wanting it. 20 (*Calls.*) Jack Smith! Jack Smith! He's gone through the crowd; hurry after him, Bartley, he'll be wanting it.

*Bartley.* I'll do that. This is no safe place to be leaving it. (*He takes up fork awkwardly and upsets the basket.*) Look at that now! If there is any basket in the fair upset, 25 it must be our own basket! (*He goes out to right.*)

*Mrs. Fallon.* Get out of that! It is your own fault, it is. Talk of misfortunes and misfortunes will come. Glory be! Look at my new egg-cups rolling in every part — and my two pound of sugar with the paper broke —

---

LINE 7. **tramps:** small vessels that make irregular trips from one port to another.



## Spreading the News

*Mrs. Tarpey (turning from stall).* So, Mrs. Fallon, what happened your basket?

*Mrs. Fallon.* It's himself that knocked it down, bad manners to him. (*Putting things up*) My grand sugar that's destroyed, and he'll not drink his tea without it. I s had best go back to the shop for more, much good may it do him!

(*Enter TIM CASEY.*)

*Tim Casey.* Where is Bartley Fallon, Mrs. Fallon? I want a word with him before he'll leave the fair. I was 10 afraid he might have gone home by this for he's a temperate man.

*Mrs. Fallon.* I wish he did go home! It'd be best for me if he went home straight from the fair green, or if he never came with me at all! Where is he, is it? He's gone 15 up the road (*Jerks elbow.*) following Jack Smith with a hayfork. (*She goes out to left.*)

*Tim Casey.* Following Jack Smith with a hayfork! Did ever anyone hear the like of that. (*Shouts.*) Did you hear that news, Mrs. Tarpey? 20

*Mrs. Tarpey.* I heard no news at all.

*Tim Casey.* Some dispute I suppose it was that rose between Jack Smith and Bartley Fallon, and it seems Jack made off, and Bartley is following him with a hayfork!

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Is he now? Well, that was quick work! 25 It's not ten minutes since the two of them were here, Bartley going home and Jack going to the Five-Acre Meadow; and I had my apples to settle up, and when I looked around again Jack Smith was gone, and Bartley Fallon was gone, and Mrs. Fallon's basket upset, and all in it 30

## Spreading the News

strewn upon the ground — the tea here — the two pound of sugar there — the egg-cups there. Look, now, what a great hardship the deafness puts upon me, that I didn't hear the commencement of the fight! Wait till I tell  
5 James Ryan that I see below; he is a neighbor of Bartley's; it would be a pity if he wouldn't hear the news!

(*She goes out. Enter SHAWN EARLY and MRS. TULLY.*)

*Tim Casey.* Listen, Shawn Early! Listen, Mrs. Tully,  
10 to the news! Jack Smith and Bartley Fallon had a falling out, and Jack knocked Mrs. Fallon's basket into the road, and Bartley made an attack on him with a hayfork, and away went Jack, and Bartley after him. Look at the sugar here yet on the road!

15 *Shawn Early.* Do you tell me so? Well, that's a queer thing, and Bartley Fallon so quiet a man!

*Mrs. Tully.* I wouldn't wonder at all. I would never think well of a man that would have that sort of a moldering look. It's likely he has overtaken Jack by this.

20 (*Enter JAMES RYAN and MRS. TARPEY.*)

*James Ryan.* That is great news Mrs. Tarpey was telling me! I suppose that's what brought the police and the magistrate up this way. I was wondering to see them in it a while ago.

25 *Shawn Early.* The police after them? Bartley Fallon must have injured Jack so. They wouldn't meddle in a fight that was only for show!

---

LINE 18. **moldering** : molded to look like a model of perfection.

## Spreading the News

*Mrs. Tully.* Why wouldn't he injure him? There was many a man killed with no more of a weapon than a hay-fork.

*James Ryan.* Wait till I run north as far as Kelly's bar to spread the news! (*He goes out.*) 5

*Tim Casey.* I'll go tell Jack Smith's first cousin that is standing there south of the church after selling his lambs. (*Goes out.*)

*Mrs. Tully.* I'll go telling a few of the neighbors I see beyond to the west. (*Goes out.*) 10

*Shawn Early.* I'll give word of it beyond at the east of the green. (*Is going out when Mrs. Tarpey seizes hold of him.*)

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Stop a minute, Shawn Early, and tell me did you see red Jack Smith's wife, Kitty Keary, in any 15 place?

*Shawn Early.* I did. At her own house she was, drying clothes on the hedge as I passed.

*Mrs. Tarpey.* What did you say she was doing?

*Shawn Early (breaking away).* Laying out a sheet on 20 the hedge. (*He goes.*)

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Laying out a sheet for the dead! The Lord have mercy on us! Jack Smith dead, and his wife laying out a sheet for his burying! (*Calls out.*) Why didn't you tell me that before, Shawn Early? Isn't the 25 deafness the great hardship? Half the world might be dead without me knowing of it or getting word of it at all! (*She sits down and rocks herself.*) O my poor Jack Smith! To be going to his work so nice and so hearty, and to be left stretched on the ground in the full light of the day! 30

(*Enter TIM CASEY.*)

## Spreading the News

*Tim Casey.* What is it, Mrs. Tarpey? What happened since?

*Mrs. Tarpey.* O my poor Jack Smith!

*Tim Casey.* Did Bartley overtake him?

5 *Mrs. Tarpey.* O the poor man!

*Tim Casey.* Is it killed he is?

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Stretched in the Five-Acre Meadow!

*Tim Casey.* The Lord have mercy on us! Is that a fact? Who was telling you?

10 *Mrs. Tarpey.* And the wife laying out a sheet for his corpse. (*Sits up and wipes her eyes.*)

(*Enter MRS. TULLY, SHAWN EARLY, and JAMES RYAN.*)

*Mrs. Tully.* There is great talk about his work in every quarter of the fair.

15 *Mrs. Tarpey.* Ochone! cold and dead. And myself maybe the last he was speaking to!

*James Ryan.* The Lord save us! Is it dead he is?

*Tim Casey.* Dead surely.

*Shawn Early.* Well, now, hadn't Bartley Fallon great  
20 venom in him?

*Mrs. Tully.* You may be sure he had some cause. Why would he have made an end of him if he had not? (*To Mrs. Tarpey, raising her voice*) What was it rose the dispute at all, Mrs. Tarpey?

25 *Mrs. Tarpey.* Not a one of me knows. The last I saw of them, Jack Smith was standing there, and Bartley Fallon was standing there, quiet and easy, and he listening to "The Red-haired Man's Wife."

---

LINE 15. Ochone (òk-òh' ): an expression or exclamation of sorrow. 20. venom : spite.

## Spreading the News

*Mrs. Tully.* Do you hear that, Tim Casey? Do you hear that, Shawn Early and James Ryan? Bartley Fallon was here this morning listening to red Jack Smith's wife, Kitty Keary that was! Listening to her and whispering with her! It was she started the fight so! 5

*Shawn Early.* She must have followed him from her own house. It is likely some person roused him.

*Tim Casey.* I never knew, before, Bartley Fallon was friendly with Jack Smith's wife.

*Shawn Early.* Let Bartley Fallon take charge of her 10 from this out so, and let him provide for her. It is little pity she will get from any person in this parish.

*Tim Casey.* How can he take charge of her? Sure he has a wife of his own.

*Shawn Early.* With or without Kitty Keary, believe me, 15 it is for America he's making at this minute.

*Mrs. Tully.* It's likely Kitty Keary is gone with him. The poor man, to be deserted by his own wife, and the breath hardly gone out yet from his body that is lying bloody in the field! 20

(*Enter MRS. FALLON.*)

*Mrs. Fallon.* What is it the whole of the town is talking about? And what is it you yourselves are talking about? Is it about my man Bartley Fallon you are talking? Is it lies about him you are telling, saying that he went killing 25 Jack Smith? My grief that ever he came into this place at all!

*James Ryan.* Be easy now, Mrs. Fallon. Sure there is no one at all in the whole fair but is sorry for you!

*Mrs. Fallon.* Sorry for me, is it? Why would anyone 30

## Spreading the News

be sorry for me? Let you be sorry for yourselves, and that there may be shame on you forever and at the day of judgment, for the words you are saying and the lies you are telling to take away the character of my poor man, and to take the good name off of him, and to drive him to destruction! That is what you are doing!

*Mrs. Tully.* If the police do get him, and if they do put a rope around his neck, there is no one can say he does not deserve it!

10 *Mrs. Fallon.* Is that what you are saying, Bridget Tully, and is that what you think? I tell you it's too much talk you have, making yourself out to be such a great one, and to be running down every respectable person! A rope, is it? It isn't much of a rope was needed to tie up your  
15 own furniture the day you came into Martin Tully's house, and you never bringing as much as a blanket, or a penny, or a suit of clothes with you, and I myself bringing seventy pounds and two feather beds. And now you are stiffer than a woman would have a hundred pounds! It is too  
20 much talk the whole of you have. A rope is it? I tell you the whole of this town is full of liars and schemers that would hang you up for half a glass of whiskey. (*Turning to go*) People they are you wouldn't believe as much as daylight from, without you'd get up to have a look at it yourself.  
25 Killing Jack Smith indeed! Where are you at all, Bartley, till I bring you out of this? My nice quiet little man! My decent comrade! He that is as kind and as harmless as an innocent beast of the field! He'll be doing no harm at all if he'll shed the blood of some of you after this  
30 day's work! That much would be no harm at all. (*Calls out.*) Bartley! Bartley Fallon! Where are you? (*Go-*

## Spreading the News

*ing out*) Did anyone see Bartley Fallon? (*All turn to look after her.*)

*James Ryan.* It is hard for her to believe any such a thing.

(*Enter BARTLEY FALLON from right, carrying hayfork.*) 5

*Bartley.* It is what I often said to myself, if there is ever any misfortune coming to this world it is on myself it is sure to come! (*All turn round and face him.*) To be going about with this fork and to find no one to take it, and no place to leave it down, and I wanting to be gone 10 out of this — Is that you, Shawn Early? (*Holds out fork.*) It's well I met you. You have no call to be leaving the fair for a while the way I have, and how can I go till I'm rid of this fork? Will you take it and keep it until such time as Jack Smith — 15

*Shawn Early (backing).* I will not take it, Bartley Fallon, I'm very thankful to you!

*Bartley (turning to apple stall).* Look at it now, Mrs. Tarpey, it was here I got it; let me thrust it in under the stall. It will lie there safe enough, and no one will take 20 notice of it until such time as Jack Smith —

*Mrs. Tarpey.* Take your fork out of that! Is it to put trouble on me and to destroy me you want? putting it there for the police to be rooting it out maybe. (*Thrusts him back.*) 25

*Bartley.* That is a very unneighborly thing for you to do, Mrs. Tarpey. Hadn't I enough care on me with that fork before this, running up and down with it like the swinging of a clock, and afeard to lay it down in any place! I wish I'd never touched it or meddled with it at all! 30

## Spreading the News

*James Ryan.* It is a pity, indeed, you ever did.

*Bartley.* Will you yourself take it, James Ryan? You were always a neighborly man.

*James Ryan (backing).* There is many a thing I would do for you, Bartley Fallon, but I won't do that!

*Shawn Early.* I tell you there is no man will give you any help or any encouragement for this day's work.

*Bartley.* If no one at all will take it, maybe it's best to give it up to the police.

10 *Tim Casey.* There'd be a welcome for it with them surely!

(*Laughter.*)

*Mrs. Tully.* And it is to the police Kitty Keary herself will be brought.

15 *Mrs. Tarpey (rocking to and fro).* I wonder now who will take the expense of the wake for poor Jack Smith?

*Bartley.* The wake for Jack Smith!

*Tim Casey.* Why wouldn't he get a wake as well as another? Would you begrudge him that much?

20 *Bartley.* Red Jack Smith dead! Who was telling you?

*Shawn Early.* The whole town knows of it by this.

*Bartley.* Do they say what way did he die?

*James Ryan.* You don't know that yourself, I suppose, Bartley Fallon? You don't know he was followed and that  
25 he was laid dead with the stab of a hayfork?

*Bartley.* The stab of a hayfork!

*Shawn Early.* You don't know, I suppose, that the body was found in the Five-Acre Meadow?

---

LINE 16. wake : a night watch over the body of a dead person just before burial, usually by the relatives and friends.



## Spreading the News

*Bartley.* The Five-Acre Meadow!

*Tim Casey.* It is likely you don't know that the police are after the man that did it?

*Bartley.* The man that did it!

*Mrs. Tully.* You don't know, maybe, that he was made away with for the sake of Kitty Keary, his wife?

*Bartley.* Kitty Keary, his wife! (*Sits down bewildered.*)

*Mrs. Tully.* And what have you to say now, Bartley Fallon?

*Bartley (crossing himself).* I to bring that fork here, and to find that news before me! It is much if I can ever stir from this place at all, or reach as far as the road!

*Tim Casey.* Look, boys, at the new magistrate, and Jo Muldoon along with him! It's best for us to quit this.

*Shawn Early.* That is so. It is best not to be mixed in this business at all.

*James Ryan.* Bad as he is, I wouldn't like to be an informer against any man.

(*All hurry away except Mrs. Tarpey, who remains behind her stall. Enter Magistrate and Policeman.*)

*Magistrate.* What is that man doing? He is sitting alone with a hayfork. He has a guilty look. The murder was done with a hayfork!

*Policeman (in a whisper).* That's the very man they say did the act, Bartley Fallon himself!

*Magistrate.* He must have found escape difficult — he is trying to brazen it out. Stand aside — Don't go far — Have the handcuffs ready. (*He walks up to Bartley, folds his arms, and stands before him.*) Here, my man, do you know anything of John Smith?

## Spreading the News

*Bartley.* Of John Smith! Who is he, now?

*Policeman.* Jack Smith, sir — Red Jack Smith!

*Magistrate (coming a step nearer and tapping him on the shoulder).* Where is Jack Smith?

5 *Bartley (with a deep sigh, and shaking his head slowly).*  
Where is he, indeed?

*Magistrate.* What have you to tell?

*Bartley.* It is where he was this morning, standing in this spot, singing his share of songs — no, but lighting his pipe  
10 — scraping a match on the sole of his shoe —

*Magistrate.* I ask you, for the third time, where is he?

*Bartley.* I wouldn't like to say that. It is a great mystery, and it is hard to say of any man, did he earn hatred or love.

15 *Magistrate.* Tell me all you know.

*Bartley.* I was nearly sure I saw Jack Smith not ten minutes ago at the corner of the forge, and I lost him again — Was it his ghost I saw, do you think?

*Magistrate (to Policeman).* Conscience-struck! He will  
20 confess all now!

*Bartley.* His ghost to come before me! It is likely it was on account of the fork! I to have it and he to have no way to defend himself the time he met with his death!

*Magistrate (to Policeman).* I must note down his words.  
25 *(Takes out notebook. To Bartley)* I warn you that your words are being noted.

*Bartley.* If I had ha' run faster in the beginning, this terror would not be on me at the latter end! Maybe he will cast it up against me at the day of judgment — I wouldn't  
30 wonder at all at that.

*Magistrate (writing).* At the day of judgment —

## Spreading the News

*Bartley.* It was soon for his ghost to appear to me — is it coming after me always by day it will be, and stripping the clothes off in the night-time? I wouldn't wonder at all at that, being as I am an unfortunate man!

*Magistrate (sternly).* Tell me this truly. What was the motive of this crime?

*Bartley.* The motive, is it?

*Magistrate.* Yes, the motive; the cause.

*Bartley.* I'd sooner not say that.

*Magistrate.* You'd better tell me truly. Was it money? 10

*Bartley.* Not at all! What did poor Jack Smith ever have in his pockets unless it might be his hands that would be in them?

*Magistrate.* You will find it better for you if you tell me at once. 15

*Bartley.* I tell you I wouldn't for the whole world wish to say what it was — it is a thing I would not like to be talking about.

*Magistrate.* There is no use in hiding it. It will be discovered in the end. 20

*Bartley.* Well, I suppose it will, seeing that mostly everybody knows it before. Whisper here now. I will tell no lie; where would be the use? (*Puts his hand to his mouth and Magistrate stoops.*) Don't be putting the blame on the parish, for such a thing was never done in the parish 25 before — it was done for the sake of Kitty Keary, Jack Smith's wife.

*Magistrate (to Policeman).* Put on the handcuffs. We have been saved some trouble. I knew he would confess if taken the right way. 30

(*Policeman puts on handcuffs.*)

## Spreading the News

*Bartley.* Handcuffs now! Glory be! I always said, if there was ever any misfortune coming to this place it was on myself it would fall. I to be in handcuffs! There's no wonder at all in that.

5 (*Enter MRS. FALLON, followed by the rest. She is looking back at them as she speaks.*)

*Mrs. Fallon.* Telling lies the whole of the people of this town are; telling lies, telling lies as fast as a dog will trot! Speaking against my poor respectable man! Saying he  
10 made an end of Jack Smith! My decent comrade! There is no better man and no kinder man in the whole of the five parishes! It's little annoyance he ever gave to anyone! (*Turns and sees him.*) What in the earthly world do I see before me? Bartley Fallon in charge of the police!  
15 Handcuffs on him! O Bartley, Bartley, what did you do at all, at all?

*Bartley.* O Mary, there has a great misfortune come upon me! It is what I always said, that if there is ever any misfortune —

20 *Mrs. Fallon.* What did he do at all, or is it bewitched I am?

*Magistrate.* This man has been arrested on a charge of murder.

*Mrs. Fallon.* Whose charge is that? Don't believe  
25 them! They are all liars in this place! Give me back my man!

*Magistrate.* It is natural you should take his part, but you have no cause of complaint against your neighbors. He has been arrested for the murder of John Smith, on his  
30 own confession.



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“O Bartley, Bartley, what did you do at all, at all?”



## Spreading the News

*Mrs. Fallon.* The saints of heaven protect us! And what did he want killing Jack Smith?

*Magistrate.* It is best you should know all. He did it on account of a love-affair with the murdered man's wife.

*Mrs. Fallon* (*sitting down*). With Jack Smith's wife! 5  
With Kitty Keary! Ohone, the traitor!

*The Crowd.* A great shame, indeed. He is a traitor, indeed.

*Mrs. Tully.* To America he was bringing her, Mrs. Fallon. 10

*Bartley.* What are you saying, Mary? I tell you —

*Mrs. Fallon.* Don't say a word! I won't listen to any word you'll say! (*Stops her ears.*) Oh, isn't he the treacherous villain? Ohone go deo!

*Bartley.* Be quiet till I speak! Listen to what I say! 15

*Mrs. Fallon.* Sitting beside me on the car coming to the town, so quiet and so respectable, and treachery like that in his heart!

*Bartley.* Is it your wits you have lost, or is it I myself that have lost my wits? 20

*Mrs. Fallon.* And it's hard I earned you, slaving, slaving — and you grumbling, and sighing, and coughing, and discontented, and the priest wore out anointing you, with all the times you threatened to die!

*Bartley.* Let you be quiet till I tell you! 25

*Mrs. Fallon.* You to bring such a disgrace into the parish. A thing that was never heard of before!

*Bartley.* Will you shut your mouth and hear me speaking?

*Mrs. Fallon.* And if it was for any sort of a fine hand- 30  
some woman, but for a little fistful of a woman like Kitty

## Spreading the News

Keary, that's not four feet high hardly, and not three teeth in her head unless she got new ones! May God reward you, Bartley Fallon, for the black treachery in your heart and the wickedness in your mind, and the red blood of poor Jack Smith that is wet upon your hand!

(*Voice of Jack Smith heard singing :*)

The sea shall be dry,  
The earth under mourning and ban!  
Then loud shall he cry  
10 For the wife of the red-haired man!

*Bartley.* It's Jack Smith's voice — I never knew a ghost to sing before. It is after myself and the fork he is coming! (*Goes back. Enter JACK SMITH.*) Let one of you give him the fork and I will be clear of him now and for  
15 eternity!

*Mrs. Tarpey.* The Lord have mercy on us! Red Jack Smith! The man that was going to be waked!

*James Ryan.* Is it back from the grave you are come?

*Shawn Early.* Is it alive you are, or is it dead you are?

20 *Tim Casey.* Is it yourself at all that's in it?

*Mrs. Tully.* Is it letting on you were to be dead?

*Mrs. Fallon.* Dead or alive, let you stop Kitty Keary, your wife, from bringing my man away with her to America!

25 *Jack Smith.* It is what I think, the wits are gone astray on the whole of you. What would my wife want bringing Bartley Fallon to America?

*Mrs. Fallon.* To leave yourself, and to get quit of you she wants, Jack Smith, and to bring him away from myself.

30 That's what the two of them had settled together.



## Spreading the News

*Jack Smith.* I'll break the head of any man that says that! Who is it says it? (*To Tim Casey*) Was it you said it? (*To Shawn Early*) Was it you?

*All Together* (*backing and shaking their heads*). It wasn't I said it! 5

*Jack Smith.* Tell me the name of any man that said it!

*All Together* (*pointing to Bartley*). It was *him* that said it!

*Jack Smith.* Let me at him till I break his head!

(*Bartley backs in terror. Neighbors hold Jack Smith back.*) 10

*Jack Smith* (*trying to free himself*). Let me at him! Isn't he the pleasant sort of a scarecrow for any woman to be crossing the ocean with! It's back from the docks of New York he'd be turned (*trying to rush at him again*), with a lie in his mouth and treachery in his heart, and another man's 15 wife by his side, and he passing her off as his own! Let me at him, can't you? (*Makes another rush, but is held back.*)

*Magistrate* (*pointing to Jack Smith*). Policeman, put the handcuffs on this man. I see it all now. A case of false impersonation, a conspiracy to defeat the ends of justice. 20 We must take both these men to the scene of the murder. We must confront them with the body of the real Jack Smith.

*Jack Smith.* I'll break the head of any man that will find my dead body! 25

*Magistrate.* I'll call more help from the barracks. (*Blows Policeman's whistle.*)

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LINE 20. **impersonation**: the pretending to be another person. **conspiracy**: an agreement between two or more persons to do a certain act.

## Spreading the News

*Bartley.* It is what I am thinking, if myself and Jack Smith are put together in the one cell for the night, the handcuffs will be taken off him, and his hands will be free, and murder will be done that time surely!

5 *Magistrate.* Come on!

*(They turn to the right.)*

CURTAIN

THE FARCE OF THE WORTHY MASTER  
PIERRE PATELIN

TRANSLATED FROM THE MEDIEVAL FRENCH

BY

MORITZ JAGENDORF

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## CHARACTERS

THE JUDGE, whom no man dare judge.

PIERRE PATELIN (pyâr păt'läN'), the lawyer, a counselor indeed, possessing all those virtues which a good counselor should possess.

GUILLEMETTE (gē'yê-mět'), his wife, a fit wife for a lawyer.

GUILLAUME JOCEAULME (gē'yôm'zhô'sôlm'), the draper, a successful merchant who has been cheating his customers from the day he began selling.

AGNELET (ân'yê'lě'), a shepherd, a fellow who, if his lot in life had been better, might have become a lawyer like Patelin, or a merchant like Joceaulme.

This happened in a little town in France in the Year of Our Lord 1400.

## THE FARCE OF THE WORTHY MASTER PIERRE PATELIN

SCENE I: — *On either side of the stage is a street scene. At the back, a curtain is partly drawn to each side showing the interior of Patelin's house. PATELIN sits in bed reading a large folio; on a chair next to the bed GUILLEMETTE sits mending an old dress. On a bench a little to one side are kitchen utensils: a frying pan, a broom, etc. On the bed lie a night-gown and a cap.*

*Guillemette.* You have nothing to say now, I suppose, have you? . . . While I needs must mend rags a beggar would be ashamed to wear — and you, a member of the <sup>10</sup> learned profession . . . a lawyer . . . !

*Patelin (in bed).* There was a time when my door was crowded with clients . . . when I had plenty of work . . . and fine clothes to wear, too.

*Guillemette.* Of what good is that to-day — eh? 15

*Patelin.* Wife, I was too shrewd for them. Men don't like people wiser than themselves.

*Guillemette.* Aye, you could always beat them at law . . . but that was long ago.

*Patelin.* It hurts me truly to see you mending rags . . . <sup>20</sup> and wives of men who are thick-skulled wearing golden-

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LINE 4. *folio*: a book of the largest size, made of large sheets of paper folded once.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

threaded cloth and fine wool. There is that draper's wife across the way. . . .

*Guillemette.* Cease the cackling. (*Silently working for a while*) I'd give something rare and costly for a new gown  
5 on St. Mary's day. Heaven knows I need it.

*Patelin.* So you do and so do I as well. It is not fit to see one of the learned profession walking about like a beggar on the highway. Ah! If I could only get some clients! I know my law well enough yet. There is not many a one  
10 can beat me at the finer points.

*Guillemette.* A fig for it all. Of what good is it? We are all but starved . . . and as for clothes — look. (*Holds up the dress she is mending.*)

*Patelin.* Silence, good wife! Could I but have some  
15 business and put my head with seriousness to it. . . . Who knows but the days of plenty would soon enough return!

*Guillemette.* There is not a soul in town but a fool would trust himself to you. They know too well your way of handling cases. They say you are a master . . . at cheat-  
20 ing.

(*Patelin rises indignant.*)

*Patelin.* They mean at law . . . at law, good wife. Ha, I should like to see a lawyer beat me at it . . . and . . .  
(*Suddenly stops, thinks for a moment, then his whole face*  
25 *lights up.*) I am going to market. I have just thought of a little business I have there. (*Gets out of bed.*)

*Guillemette.* Going to market? What for? You have no money.

*Patelin.* I am going to market . . . on business . . . to  
30 the long-nosed donkey, our neighbor . . . the draper.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*Guillemette.* What for?

*Patelin.* To buy some cloth. . . .

*Guillemette.* Holy Saints! You know well he is more close-fisted than any other merchant in town. He'll never trust you. 5

*Patelin.* Ah, that's just why I am going. The more miserly, the easier to gull; and . . . I have thought of something fine . . . that will get us enough cloth . . . both for you and me.

*Guillemette.* You must be mad. 10

*Patelin (not heeding her).* Let me see. . . . (*Measuring her with his arm's length*) Two and one-half for you. . . . (*Measuring himself in the same way*) Three for me . . . and . . . What color would you want it? Green or red?

*Guillemette.* I'll be pleased with any kind. Beggars 15 can't be choosers. But don't think I believe what you say. I am not a fool. You'll never get any from Master Joceaulme. He'll never trust you, I am certain.

*Patelin.* Who knows? Who knows? He might . . . and then really get paid . . . on Doom's-day. . . . Ho, 20 ho. . . .

*Guillemette.* Don't you think you had better make haste, lest all the cloth be sold?

*Patelin (offended, walking off).* Wife, I forgive you. You are only a woman. I'll teach you a fine lesson now. 25 If I don't bring home a fine piece of cloth — dark green or blue, such as wives of great lords wear, then never believe another word I say.

*Guillemette.* But how will you do it? You haven't a copper in your pocket. 30

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LINE 7. gull : to cheat.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*Patelin.* Ah! That's a secret. Just wait and see. So . . . (*to himself as he walks slowly away*) two and one-half for her and three for me. . . . Look well to the house while I am away, wife. (*Exit.*)

5 *Guillemette.* What fool of a merchant'll trust him! . . . unless he is blind and deaf!

(*The back curtains are closed and now only the street scene is visible.*)

SCENE II: — *PATELIN comes from his door and walks*  
10 *across to the Draper's table. The Draper is just coming out with a pack of cloth and wools which he throws on the table. He busies himself arranging his goods. Patelin looks on for a while and then goes right up to him.*

*Patelin.* Ho, there, worthy Master Guillaume Joceaulme,  
15 permit me the pleasure of shaking your hand. How do you feel?

*The Draper.* Very fine, the saints be thanked.

*Patelin.* I am truly happy to hear that. And business?

*The Draper.* You know how . . . one day one way, the  
20 other, altogether different. You can never tell when ill luck may blow your way.

*Patelin.* May the saints keep it from your doors! It's the very phrase I often heard your father use. What a man he was! Wise! There was not an event in Church,  
25 State, or market he did not foretell. No other was more esteemed. And you—they say that you are more and more like him each day.

*The Draper.* Do seat yourself, good Master Patelin.

*Patelin.* Oh, I can well stand.



## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*The Draper.* Oh, but you must. (*Forcing him to sit on the bench.*)

*Patelin.* Ah! I knew him well, your father. You resemble him as one drop of milk another. What a man he was! Wise! We, among the learned, called him the <sup>5</sup> weather-cock. Well-nigh every piece of clothing I wore came from his shop.

*The Draper.* He was an honest man, and people liked to buy from him.

*Patelin.* A more honest soul there never was. And I <sup>10</sup> have heard often said the apple has fallen nigh the tree.

*The Draper.* Of a truth, good Master . . . ?

*Patelin.* It's not flattery, either. (*Looking intently at him*) You do resemble him! No child was ever so like his father. Each marked like the other. This is just his <sup>15</sup> nose, his ears, nay, the very dimple on his chin.

*The Draper.* Yes, they do say I look much like him.

*Patelin.* Like one drop of water another. . . . And kindhearted! He was ever ready to trust and help, no matter who came along. The Lord knows he was ever <sup>20</sup> the gainer by it. Even the worst scoundrels thought twice before cheating him.

*The Draper.* A merchant must always take heed, good Master Patelin. You can never know whether a man is honest or not. 25

*Patelin.* Aye, that's true. But he had a way of guessing whether it was an honest man he was dealing with that was a marvel to behold. Many a funny tale he told of it — when we sat over a bottle of wine. (*Feeling the cloth*

---

LINE 6. **weather-cock**: the figure of a cock which turns with the wind and shows its direction.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*on the table*) What a fine piece of cloth! Did you make it from your own wool? Your father always used to weave his cloths from the wool of his own sheep.

*The Draper.* So do I, sir. From the wool of my own 5 sheep.

*Patelin.* You don't say so! This is business in a manner I like to see it done. The father all over again.

*The Draper (seeing the possibility of a sale).* Ah, worthy Master Patelin, it is a great hardship, indeed, to 10 which I put myself because of this. And the loss and cost! Here a shepherd kills your sheep; I have a case against one of those scoundrels right now. The weavers ask pay like goldsmiths. But to me this is all of little account. . . . I'd attend to the making of each piece myself were it to cost 15 ten times as much as I get in return. . . . So long as I please those who buy.

*Patelin.* I can see this. It would make a fine gown.

*The Draper.* You could not get a finer piece even in the city of Paris.

20 *Patelin.* I am sorry I am not out to do any buying just now, though I am tempted to.

*The Draper.* Business bad? Money scarce?

*Patelin.* No, indeed not. I have a nice little sum of gold crowns even now, but I am about to invest them in some- 25 thing profitable. . . . It's as strong as iron, this cloth here. (*Examining it.*)

*The Draper.* You may take my word for it, Master, there

---

LINE 13. goldsmiths: workers in gold. Goldsmiths commonly acted as bankers as late as the eighteenth century.  
24. crowns: English coins, stamped with a crown, worth about five shillings.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

is not a finer or stronger in town. What's more, it can be bought cheap just now. It's a fine investment. Wool is certain to go up.

*Patelin.* Aye, it's a fine piece of cloth, Master Joceaulme. . . . But then I shouldn't . . . yet . . . 5

*The Draper.* Come, Master Patelin, come. You need the cloth and have the money to buy. Then you'll invest a few crowns less. A man should always have a gown tucked away in the coffer. What would you say if some fine day, comes along the town crier shouting: there has 10 been a new judge appointed and it is Master Pa . . .

*Patelin.* You must have your little joke, worthy sir. Just like your father. I would pass his shop, a friendly chat . . . and then my purse was much the lighter for it. But I never regretted it, never. 15

*The Draper.* You wouldn't now, either. It's well worth buying.

*Patelin.* It tempts me. . . . It would look well on my good wife, and I could use it well for myself.

*The Draper.* It needs but your saying. Come, what's 20 the word, Master?

*Patelin.* Well . . .

*The Draper.* It's yours even though you hadn't a copper.

*Patelin (somewhat absent-minded).* Oh, I know that.

*The Draper.* What? 25

*Patelin.* I'll take it.

*The Draper.* That's talking. How much do you want?

*Patelin.* How much is it a yard?

*The Draper.* Which do you like best? The blue?

*Patelin.* Yes, that is the one. 30

---

LINE 9. **coffer** : chest or trunk.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*The Draper.* You want a rock bottom price, no haggling. This is the finest piece in my shop. For you I'll make it twenty-one sous a yard.

*Patelin.* Holy Saints! Master! What do you take me for, a fool? It isn't the first time I am buying cloth.

*The Draper.* It's the price it cost me myself; by all the saints in Heaven.

*Patelin.* That's too much — entirely too much.

*The Draper.* Wool costs like holy oil now, and these  
10 shepherds are forever robbing me.

*Patelin.* Well, there is truth in what you say. I'll take it at the price. I like to see every man make his honest penny. Measure it.

*The Draper.* How much do you want?

15 *Patelin.* Let me see. Two and a half for her, three for me, that makes five and a half.

*The Draper.* Take hold there, Master, here they are.  
(*Measuring out*) One . . . two . . . three . . . four . . .  
five. I'll make it six. You'll not mind the few coppers  
20 more.

*Patelin.* Not when I get something fine in return. Then I need a cap, too.

*The Draper.* Would you like me to measure it backwards?

25 *Patelin.* Oh, no, I trust your honesty. How much is it?

*The Draper.* Six yards at twenty-one sous the yard — that's exactly nine francs.

---

LINE 1. **rock bottom price** : lowest possible price. **haggling** : disputing. 3. **sous**. A sou is a French coin worth about a cent. 27. **francs**. The franc was worth about twenty cents before the World War.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*Patelin.* Nine francs. . . . (*Under his breath*) Here it goes. Nine francs.

*The Draper.* Yes, and a good bargain you got.

*Patelin* (*searching his pockets*). No . . . I have but little with me, and I must buy some small things. You'll 5 get your money to-morrow.

*The Draper.* What!!! . . . No . . . No . . .

*Patelin.* Well, good Master Joceaulme, you don't think I carry gold coin with me, do you? You'd have me give thieves a good chance to steal it? Your father trusted me 10 many a time. And you, Master Guillaume, should take after your father.

*The Draper.* I like my money cash.

*Patelin.* It's there waiting for you, good Master Draper. You can come for it, I hope. 15

*The Draper.* It's bad custom to sell on credit.

*Patelin.* Did I ask you for credit: for a month, a week, a day? Come to my house at noon, and you will find your money ready. Does that satisfy you?

*The Draper.* I prefer my money cash, right on the 20 purchase. . . .

*Patelin.* And then, Master Guillaume, you have not been to my house for I don't know how long. Your father was there many a time—but you don't seem to care for poor folk like myself. 25

*The Draper.* It's we merchants who are poor. We have no bags of gold lying idle for investments.

*Patelin.* They are there, Master, waiting for you. And my good wife put a fine goose on the spit just when I left. You can have a tender wing. Your father always liked it. 30

---

LINE 29. spit : a slender pointed rod to hold roasting meat.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*The Draper.* Perhaps. . . . It's true. I haven't been to your house for a long time. I'll come at noon, Master Patelin, and bring the cloth with me.

*Patelin (snatching the cloth from him).* Oh, I would never trouble you. I can carry it.

*The Draper.* But . . .

*Patelin.* No, good sir, not for the wealth of the East. I would not think of asking *you* to carry it for *me*.

*The Draper.* I'd rather . . . well . . . I'll soon be there, Master. I'll come before the noon meal. Don't forget the nine francs.

*Patelin.* Aye, I'll not. And there'll be a bottle of red wine . . . and a fine fat goose. Be certain to come.

*(Exit Patelin.)*

*The Draper.* That I will right soon. Ho, ho, ho — ha, ha, ha — the fool! A good bargain he got! Twenty-one sous the yard. It isn't worth one-half that. And on top of it a fine dinner . . . Burgundy wine and a roasted goose! For a customer like that every day! Now I'll take in my cloth. I'll soon to his house. *(Takes up the cloth and leaves.)*

SCENE III: — *The back curtains are drawn aside showing Patelin's chamber.)*

*Patelin (running in).* Wife, wife . . . (GUILLEMETTE enters, the old gown in her hand.) Well, Madam . . . now . . . I've got it . . . right here I have it. What did I tell you?

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LINE 18. **Burgundy** : an old province in France, noted for its fine wines.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*Guillemette.* What have you?

*Patelin.* Something you desire greatly. But what are you doing with this old rag? I think it will do well for a bed for your cat. I did promise you a new gown and get you one I did. 5

*Guillemette.* What's gotten into your head? Did you drink anything on the way?

*Patelin.* And it's paid for, Madam. It's paid for, I tell you.

*Guillemette.* Are you making sport of me? What are 10 you plappering!

*Patelin.* I have it right here.

*Guillemette.* What have you?

*Patelin.* Cloth fit for the Queen of Sheba. (*Displaying the cloth*) Here it is! 15

*Guillemette.* Where did you steal it? Who'll pay for it? What kind of scrape have you gotten into now?

*Patelin.* You need not worry, good dame. It's paid for . . . and a good price at that.

*Guillemette.* Why, how much did it cost? You did not 20 have a copper when you left.

*Patelin.* It cost nine francs, fair lady . . . a bottle of red wine . . . and the wing of a roasted goose.

*Guillemette.* Are you crazy? You had no money, no goose!!! 25

*Patelin.* Aye, aye, that I did. I paid for it as it behooves one of the learned profession of law: in promissory statements. And the merchant who took them is no fool

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LINE 11. *plappering*: plumping down; letting fall with a splash. 27. *promissory*: expressing a promise or agreement.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

either, oh, no ; not a fool at all ; but a very wise man and a shrewd. . . .

*Guillemette.* Who was he? How . . .

*Patelin.* He is the king of asses, the chancellor of ba-  
5 boons . . . our worthy neighbor, the long-nosed draper,  
Master Joceaulme.

*Guillemette.* Will you cease this jabbering and tell me  
how it happened? How did he come to trust you? There  
is no worse skinflint in town than he.

10 *Patelin.* Ah, wife! My head! My knowledge of the  
law! I turned him into a noble and fine lord. I told him  
what a jewel his father was; I laid on him all the nine  
virtues thick as wax, and . . . in the end he trusted me  
most willingly with six yards of his fine cloth.

15 *Guillemette.* Ho, ho, ho, you are a marvel! And when  
does he expect to get paid?

*Patelin.* By noon.

*Guillemette.* What will we do when he comes for the  
money?

20 *Patelin.* He'll be here for it and soon to boot. He must  
be dreaming even now of his nine francs, and his wine, and  
the goose. Oh, we'll give him a goose! Now you get the  
bed ready and I'll get in.

*Guillemette.* What for?

25 *Patelin.* As soon as he comes and asks for me, swear  
that I've been in bed here for the last two months. Tell it  
in a sad voice and with tears in your eyes. And if he says  
anything, shout at him to speak lower. If he cries: "My  
cloth, my money," tell him he is crazy, that I haven't been  
30 from bed for weeks. And if he doesn't go with that, I'll

---

LINE 4. chancellor : a high officer.



## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

dance him a little tune that'll make him wonder whether he is on earth or in hell.

*(Patelin puts on his nightgown and cap. Guillemette goes to the door and returns quickly.)*

*Guillemette.* He is coming, he is coming; what if he arrests you?

*Patelin.* Don't worry; just do what I tell you. Quick, hide the cloth under the bedclothes. Don't forget. I've been sick for two months.

*Guillemette.* Quick, quick, here he is. 10

*(Patelin gets into bed and draws the curtains. Guillemette sits down and begins to mend the old dress. The Draper enters.)*

*The Draper.* Good day, fair dame.

*Guillemette.* Sh . . . Speak lower. 15

*The Draper.* Why? What's the matter?

*Guillemette.* You don't know?

*The Draper.* Where is he?

*Guillemette.* Alas! Nearer to Paradise than to Earth.  
*(Begins to cry.)* 20

*The Draper.* Who?

*Guillemette.* How can you be so heartless and ask me that, when you know he has been in bed for the last eleven weeks?

*The Draper.* Who? 25

*Guillemette.* My husband.

*The Draper.* Who?

*Guillemette.* My husband—Master Pierre, once a lawyer . . . and now a sick man . . . on his death-bed.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*The Draper.* What!!!!

*Guillemette (crying).* You have not heard of it? Alas!  
And . . .

*The Draper.* And who was it just took six yards of cloth  
5 from my shop?

*Guillemette.* Alas! How am I to know? It was surely  
not he.

*The Draper.* You must be dreaming, good woman.  
Are you his wife? The wife of Pierre Patelin, the lawyer?

10 *Guillemette.* That I am, good sir.

*The Draper.* Then it was your husband, who was such a  
good friend of my father, who came to my shop a quarter  
of an hour ago and bought six yards of cloth for nine francs.  
And now I am here for my money. Where is he?

15 *Guillemette.* This is no time for jesting, good sir.

*The Draper.* Are you crazy? I want my money, that's  
all.

*Guillemette.* Don't scream. It's little sleep he gets as it  
is, and here you come squealing like a dying pig. He has  
20 been in bed for nigh twelve weeks and hardly slept three  
nights.

*The Draper.* Who? What are you talking about?

*Guillemette.* Who! My poor sick husband. (*Weeps.*)

*The Draper.* Come! What's this? Stop that fooling.  
25 I want my money, my nine francs.

*Guillemette (screaming).* Don't scream so loud. He is  
dying.

*The Draper.* But that's a lie. He was at my shop, but  
a quarter of an hour ago.

30 *Patelin (groaning from behind the curtain).* Au, au,  
au . . .

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*Guillemette.* Ah, there he is on his death-bed. He has been there for thirteen weeks yesterday without eating as much as a fly.

*The Draper.* What are you talking about? He was at my shop just now and bought six yards of cloth . . . blue 5 cloth.

*Guillemette.* How can you make sport of me? Good Master Guillaume, don't you see how he is! Do speak lower. Noise puts him in agony.

*The Draper.* It's you who are howling. Give me my 10 money, and I'll not speak at all.

*Guillemette (screaming).* He is deadly sick. This is no time for fooling. Stop screaming. What is it you want?

*The Draper.* I want my money, or the cloth . . . the 15 cloth he bought from me only a little while ago.

*Guillemette.* What are you talking about, my good man? There is something strange in your voice.

*The Draper.* You see, good lady, your husband, Pierre Patelin, the learned counselor, who was such a good friend 20 of my father, came to my shop but a quarter of an hour ago and chose six yards of blue cloth . . . and then told me to come to his house to get the money and . . .

*Guillemette.* Ha, ha, ha, what a fine joke. You seem to be in good humor to-day, Master Draper! To-day? . . . 25 When he has been in bed for fourteen weeks . . . on the point of death! (*She screams louder and louder all the time.*) To-day, hey! Why do you come to make sport of me? Get out, get out!

*The Draper.* I will. Give me my money first . . . or 30 give me my cloth. Where is he with it?

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*Guillemette.* Ah me! He is very sick and refuses to eat a bite.

*The Draper.* I am speaking about my cloth. If he does not want it, or hasn't the money, I'll gladly take it back. He took it this morning. I'll swear to it. Ask him yourself. I saw him and spoke to him. A piece of blue cloth.

*Guillemette.* Are you cracked or have you been drinking?

*The Draper (becoming frantic).* He took six yards of cloth, blue cloth.

*Guillemette.* What do I care whether it is green or blue? My husband has not left the house for the last fifteen weeks.

*The Draper.* May the Lord bless me! But I am sure I saw him. It was he I am sure.

*Guillemette.* Have you no heart? I have had enough of your fooling.

*The Draper.* If you think I am a fool . . .

*Patelin (behind the curtain).* Au, au, au, come and raise my pillow. Stop the braying of that ass! Everything is black and yellow! Drive these black beasts away! Marmara, carimari, carimara!

*The Draper.* It's he!

*Guillemette.* Yes, it is; alas!

*The Draper.* Good Master Patelin, I've come for my nine francs, . . . which you promised me. . . .

*Patelin (sits up and sticks his head out between the curtains).* Ha, you dog . . . come here. Shut the door.

---

LINE 22. **Marmara, carimari, carimara** (màr'mà-rà', kà'rē-mà'rē, kà'rē-mà'rà): nonsensical words of no language, used to impress the hearer with a supposed knowledge of Latin.





"Catch him . . . quick. The cat! The monk!"

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

Rub the soles of my feet . . . tickle my toes. . . . Drive these devils away. It's a monk; there, up he goes . . .

*The Draper.* What's this? Are you crazy?

*Patelin (getting out of bed).* Ha . . . do you see him? A black monk flying in the air with the draper hanging on his nose. Catch him . . . quick. (*Speaking right in the Draper's face, who retreats.*) The cat! The monk! Up he flies, and there are ten little devils tweaking your long nose! Heigh, ho! (*Goes back to bed, falling on it seemingly exhausted.*)

10

*Guillemette (in loud lamentations).* Now see what you have done.

*The Draper.* But what does this mean? . . . I don't understand it.

*Guillemette.* Don't you see, don't you see!

15

*The Draper.* It serves me right; why did I ever sell on credit? But I sold it, I am certain of that, and I would swear 'twas to him this morning. Did he become sick since he returned?

*Guillemette.* Are you beginning that joke all over again?

20

*The Draper.* I am sure I sold it to him. Ah, but this may be just a cooked-up story. Tell me, have you a goose on the spit?

*Guillemette.* A goose on the spit! No-o-o-o, not on the spit! You are the nearest. . . . But I've had enough of this. Get out and leave me in peace.

25

*The Draper.* Maybe you are right. I am commencing to doubt it all. Don't cry. I must think this over for a while. But . . . I am sure I had six yards of cloth . . . and he chose the blue. I gave it to him with my own

30

---

LINE 11. *lamentations*: cries of sorrow.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

hands. Yet . . . here he is in bed sick . . . fifteen weeks. But he was at my shop a little while ago. "Come to my house and eat some goose," he said. Never, never, will I trust any one again.

5 *Guillemette.* Perhaps your memory is getting wobbly with age. I think you had better go and look before you talk. Maybe the cloth is still there.

*(Exit the Draper, across the front stage and into his shop.)*

*Patelin (getting up cautiously and speaking low).* Is he  
10 gone?

*Guillemette.* Take care, he may come back.

*Patelin.* I can't stand this any longer. *(Jumps out.)* We put it to him heavy, didn't we, my pretty one, eh? Ho, ho, ho. *(Laughs uproariously.)*

15 *The Draper (coming from his shop, looking under the table).* The thief, the liar, the liar, he did buy . . . steal it? It isn't there. This was all sham. Ha, I'll get it, though. *(Runs toward Patelin's house.)* What's this I hear . . . laughing! . . . the robbers. *(Rushes in.)* You thieves.  
20 . . . I want my cloth. . . . *(Patelin, finding no time to get back into bed, gets hold of the broom, puts the frying pan on his head and begins to jump around, straddling the broom stick. Guillemette can't stop laughing.)*

*The Draper.* Laughing in my very nose, eh! Ah, my  
25 money, pay. . . .

*Guillemette.* I am laughing for unhappiness. Look, how the poor man is, it is you who have done this, with your bellowing.

*Patelin.* Ha. . . . Where is the Guitar? . . . The lady  
30 Guitar I married. . . . Ho, ho. Come, my children. . . .



## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

Light the lanterns. Ho, ho, ha. . . . (*Stops, looking intently into the air.*)

*The Draper.* Stop your jabbering. My money! Please, my money . . . for the cloth. . . .

*Guillemette.* Again. . . . Didn't you have enough before? But. . . . Oh. . . . (*Looking intently at him*) Now I understand!!! Why, I am sure of it. You are mad . . . else you wouldn't talk this way.

*The Draper.* Oh, Holy Saints . . . perhaps I am.

*Patelin* (*begins to jump around as if possessed, playing a thousand and one crazy antics*). Mère de dieu la coronade . . . que de l'argent il ne me sonne. Hast understood me, gentle sir?

*The Draper.* What's this? I want my money. . . .

*Guillemette.* He is speaking in delirium; he once had an uncle in Limoges and it's the language of that country.

(*Patelin gives the Draper a kick and falls down as if exhausted.*)

*The Draper.* Oh! Oh! Where am I? This is the strangest sickness I ever saw.

20

*Guillemette* (*who has run to her husband*). Do you see what you have done?

*Patelin* (*jumps up and acts still wilder*). Ha! The green cat . . . with the draper. I am happy. . . . (*Chases the Draper and his wife around the room. Guillemette seeks protection, clinging to the Draper.*)

*Guillemette.* Oh, I am afraid, I am afraid. Help me, kind sir, he may do me some harm.

---

LINE 11. Mère de dieu, etc.: meaningless French. 16. Limoges (lē'mōzh'): a manufacturing town in France noted for its porcelain.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*The Draper (running around the room with Guillemette clinging to him). What's this? He is bewitching me.*

*Patelin (trying to explain the signs to the Draper, who retreats. Patelin follows him, whacking the floor and furniture and occasionally striking the Draper. Finally the Draper gets on one side of the bed, and Patelin on the other. In that position he addresses him in a preachy, serious voice). Et bona dies sit vobis magister amantissime, pater reverendis-*  
*10 dead.)*

*Guillemette. Oh, kind sir. Help me. He is dead. Help me put him to bed. . . . (They both drag him into bed.)*

*The Draper. It were well for me to go, I think. He might die and I might be blamed for it. It must have been*  
*15 some imps who took my cloth . . . and I came here for the money, led by an evil spirit. It's passing strange . . . but I think I had better go.*

*(Exit. The Draper goes to his shop. Guillemette watches, turning every moment to Patelin who has sat up in bed, warn-*  
*20 ing him not to get out. When the Draper disappears, she turns around and bursts out laughing.)*

*Patelin (jumping out). Now, wife, what do you think of me, eh? (Takes the cloth.) Oh! Didn't we play a clever game? I did not think I could do it so well. He got a hot*

---

LINE 7. *Et bona dies*, etc.: another attempt on Pierre's part to impress the tailor with his knowledge of languages. This is poor Latin, sometimes called kitchen Latin to refer to the Latin used by the uneducated. The passage has no sensible meaning. Freely translated, it may mean something like this: "May the day give you its best, most beloved Master, most reverend Father, so that you may burn."

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

goose, didn't he? (*Spreading the cloth*) This'll do for both and there'll be a goodly piece left.

*Guillemette.* You are an angel. Oh, ho! And now let us go and begin to cut it up.

(*Both exit, and the curtain is drawn.*)

5

SCENE IV: — *The street scene.*

(*The Draper comes from the shop with a piece of cloth under his arm. He is much upset. Looks once more under the table for the cloth which Patelin took.*)

*The Draper.* These hounds. . . . I'll get them yet.<sup>10</sup> Here's a fine piece of cloth! Only the fiend himself knows who took it—and then that shepherd. To think of it . . . robbing me for years. But him I'll get surely. I'll see him hanged, yet. (*AGNELET appears from the other side.*) Ah, here he comes. . . .<sup>15</sup>

*The Shepherd* (*stutters, thick voice; a typical yokel*). God give you a good day, sweet sir. I greet you, good sir. . . . I was not sure it was you, good sir. . . .

*The Draper.* You were not, eh? You knave; but you will soon know for certain . . . when your head is on the<sup>20</sup> gallows . . . high up. . . .

*The Shepherd.* Yes, good sir . . . no . . . I saw the constable . . . and he spoke to me that you want to see me.

*The Draper.* Oh, no! Not I, my fine thief . . . but the judge.<sup>25</sup>

*The Shepherd.* Oh, Lord! Why did you summon me? I don't know why. I never killed your sheep.

---

LINE 16. *yokel*: country bumpkin.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*The Draper.* Oh, no, you are a saint. It's you, you mangy dog . . . all the while you were robbing me of my sheep. But now you'll pay for it with your head. I'll see you hanged.

5 *The Shepherd.* Hang by the neck! Good Master, have pity.

*The Draper.* Pity, eh? And you had pity when you were robbing me of my cloth . . . I mean my sheep. Thief, scoundrel, you robber . . . where is my cloth . . . my  
10 sheep?

*The Shepherd.* They died of sickness, sir. . . .

*The Draper.* You lie, you caitiff, you stole them, and now . . .

*The Shepherd.* It is not so, good Master. I swear. On  
15 my soul. . . .

*The Draper.* You have no soul, you thief. By all the saints, I'll see you dangling this Saturday. . . .

*The Shepherd.* Good and sweet Master, won't you please make a settlement . . . and not bring me to court?

20 *The Draper.* Away, you thief. I'll make you pay for those six yards . . . I mean those sheep. You just wait.  
(Walks off in a fury.)

*The Shepherd.* Oh, Lord! I must quickly find a lawyer. . . . I've heard of Master Patelin . . . they say no  
25 man is better at gulling. It's here he lives. (PATELIN comes just then from his house. When he sees Agnelet he tries to get back, fearing it may be the Draper, but on hearing his voice he stops.) Ho, there, Master! Is it you who are Master Patelin, the lawyer?

30 *Patelin.* What is it you want of him?

---

LINE 12. **caitiff** (kā'tif): wretch.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*The Shepherd.* I have a little business for him.

*Patelin.* Oh! is it that! Well, I am Master Patelin. Good man, tell me the nature of your business. Is it anything pertaining to the law?

*The Shepherd.* I'll pay well. . . . I am a shepherd, good Master. A poor man, but I can pay well. I need a lawyer for a little case I have.

*Patelin.* Come this way, where we can talk lower. Some one might overhear us . . . I mean disturb us. Now, good man, what may your business be? 10

*The Shepherd.* Good Master Lawyer, teach me what to say to the judge.

*Patelin.* What is it you have done, or has some one done you an injustice?

*The Shepherd.* Must I tell you everything . . . exactly 15 as it happened?

*Patelin.* You can tell me the truth. I am your lawyer . . . . But, good friend, counsel is costly.

*The Shepherd.* I'll pay all right. It's my master whose sheep I stole who summoned me to the judge. He is going 20 to have me hanged because I stole his sheep. You see. . . . He paid like a miser. . . . Must I tell you the truth?

*Patelin.* I have told you once. You must tell me how everything really happened.

*The Shepherd.* Well . . . he paid like a miser . . . so 25 I told him some sheep had the hoof sickness and died from it . . . and I buried them far . . . far . . . away, so that the others shouldn't get it. But I really killed them and ate the meat and used the wool for myself — and he caught me right so that I cannot deny it. Now I beseech you . . . 30

---

LINE 18. **counsel** : legal advice.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

I can pay well — though he has the law on his side . . . tell me . . . whether you cannot beat him. If you can, I'll pay you in fine, gold crowns, sweet Master.

*Patelin.* Gold crowns!!! H'm, what's your name?

5 *The Shepherd.* Agnelet, a poor shepherd, but I have a few crowns put aside. You just . . .

*Patelin.* What do you intend to pay for this case?

*The Shepherd.* Will five . . . four crowns be enough, sweet sir?

10 *Patelin* (*hardly able to contain himself for excitement*).

Ah! . . . Hm . . . well . . . that will be plenty seeing that you are a poor man. But I get much greater sums friend, I do. . . . Did you say . . . five?

*The Shepherd.* Yes, sweet sir.

15 *Patelin.* You'll have to make it six. I may tell you, though, that your case is a good one, and I am sure to win it. But now tell me, are there any witnesses the plaintiff can produce? Those who saw you killing the sheep?

*The Shepherd.* Not one . . .

20 *Patelin.* That's fine.

*The Shepherd.* But more'n a dozen.

*Patelin.* That's bad. Hm, let me see now . . . no. . . .  
(*He seems to hold a deep and learned debate with himself.*)

No . . . but. . . . The book says otherwise. (*Suddenly*  
25 *his face lights up.*) I've got it . . . aye, what a wonderful idea! Two ideas in one day! You can understand a sly trick, can't you, fellow?

*The Shepherd.* Can I? Ho, ho, ho, ho. . . .

*Patelin.* But you'll pay as you promised.

30 *The Shepherd.* Hang me if I don't. But I can't pay if I hang, ho, ho, ho. . . .

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*Patelin* (gleefully). Now, first, you have never seen me; nor heard of me. . . .

*The Shepherd*. Oh, no, not that. . . .

*Patelin*. Silent until I have finished. Second, you mustn't talk a single word but "Ba." . . . (*Imitating the 5 bleating of a sheep*) Only bleat like your sheep. No matter what they talk to you. Just say Ba. . . . Even if they call you an idiot, or villain, or fool, don't answer anything but Ba. . . . Just as if you were a sheep.

*The Shepherd*. Oh, I can do that. 10

*Patelin*. Even if I talk to you, say nothing but Ba. . . . And if they split roaring at you, just say Ba. . . . The rest you leave to me. I'll get you out for certain.

*The Shepherd*. I'll surely not say another word. And I will do it right proper. 15

*Patelin*. Your case is as good as won. But don't forget the seven gold crowns.

*The Shepherd*. I'll sure not, wise and sweet Master Patelin.

*Crier* (*is heard from afar*). The court, make room. . . . 20

*Patelin*. Ah, here they come. Don't forget Ba. . . . I'll be there to help you. And . . . the money . . . don't forget that.

(Attendants, Constables, Town Clerks and Villagers enter. Two Clerks carry a seat for the Judge, which is placed 25 in the center of the stage. The Judge, fat and grouchy, comes to the front, looks about for a moment, then goes to his seat and sits down.)

*The Judge*. If there is any business to be done, come to it; the court wants to adjourn. 30

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*Patelin.* May heaven bless you and grant you all you desire.

*The Judge.* Welcome, sir. May the saints give you plenty of clients.

5 (*The Draper now comes running in. Patelin suddenly realizes that it is against him that the Shepherd must be defended and expresses uneasiness. He hides himself behind the crowd.*)

*The Draper.* My lawyer is soon coming, Your Worship.  
10 He has a little business elsewhere which is detaining him.

*The Judge.* You must think I have nothing to do but to wait for your lawyer. You are the plaintiff, aren't you? Bring your complaint. Where is the defendant?

*The Draper.* Right there, Your Worship; that lummox  
15 shepherd, who has been hiding behind that good citizen there as if he couldn't say Ba. . . . But, Your Honor, it's in fear of justice.

*The Judge.* Both being present! I will examine you.  
(*To the Draper*) Tell me all the facts of your case. Was  
20 he in your hire?

*The Draper.* Yes, Your Lordship. He killed my sheep and after I treated him like a father. . . .

*The Judge.* Did you pay him a good wage? .

*Patelin* (*edging up sideways, and covering his face with his*  
25 *his hand*). Your Lordship, I have heard it said that he never paid him a copper for his work.

---

LINE 12. **plaintiff**: the party who complains in an action; the one that begins an action at law. 13. **defendant**: the party who denies the truth of the plaintiff's complaint in an action at law. 14. **lummox**: an overgrown, awkward person.



## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*The Draper* (recognizing *Patelin*). By all that's holy . . . . You. . . . !!!!??? 'Tis he and no other.

*The Judge*. Why do you cover your face, Master Patelin?

*Patelin*. Oh, Your Lordship, I have a terrible toothache. 5

*The Judge*. I am sorry for you, for I had one myself the other day. I'll tell you a fine cure, Master. Hold your feet in cold water wherein are three hoofs of a red cow from Gascogne. This'll draw the ache into the nails of your toes and you can then rid yourself of it with great ease by cutting 10 them. 'Tis a sovereign remedy. Try it and see, Master. But let us go on. Come, Master Draper, I am in a hurry.

*The Draper* (not heeding the *Judge* but still staring at *Patelin*). It's you, isn't it? It's to you I sold six yards of cloth. Where is my money? 15

*The Judge*. What is that you are talking about?

*Patelin*. His mind is clouded, Your Lordship. He is not accustomed to speaking clearly. Perhaps the defendant will enlighten us. You . . .

*The Draper*. I am not speaking clearly!! You thief . . . 20 liar. . . .

*Patelin*. Your Worship, I think I understand him now. It's strange how incoherently those who have no legal training speak. I think he means he could have made six yards of cloth from the sheep the shepherd is supposed 25 to have stolen or killed.

*The Judge*. Aye, so it would seem. Come, Master Guillaume, finish your tale.

*Patelin*. Get to the facts as the judge directs you.

---

LINE 9. Gascogne (gás'kôn'y'): a province in the southwestern part of France.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*The Draper.* And you dare talk to me like that!

*The Judge.* Master Guillaume, come to your sheep.

(During the rest of the court scene Patelin works always so as to attract the attention of the Draper every time he tries to talk of his sheep, and so diverts his attention from that and leads him to talk of the cloth. Whenever the Draper talks of his case, Patelin either sticks his face up to him or places himself in such a position that the Draper must see him.)

10 *The Draper.* You see, Your Lordship . . . he took my six yards of cloth this morning . . . the thief. . . .

*The Judge.* Do you think I am a fool? Either you come to the point or I'll dismiss the case.

*Patelin.* Your Worship, let us call the defendant. He, 15 I am sure, will speak clearer than this draper.

*The Judge.* Yes, that will be wise. Step forward, shepherd.

*The Shepherd.* Ba . . . a . . .

*The Judge.* What's this? Am I a goat?

20 *The Shepherd.* Ba . . . a . . .

*Patelin.* Your Lordship, it seems this man is half-witted and thinks himself among his sheep.

*The Draper.* He can talk, and he is not half-witted, either . . . but a thief like you. It was you who took my 25 cloth!

*The Judge.* Cloth! What are you talking about, anyhow? Now, you either get back to your sheep or I'll dismiss the case.

*The Draper.* I will, Your Lordship, though the other 30 lies as near to my heart, but I'll leave it for another time.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

That shepherd there . . . he took six yards of cloth . . . I mean, sheep. Your Honor must forgive me. This thief . . . my shepherd, he told me I would get my money . . . for the cloth as soon . . . I mean this shepherd was to watch over my flocks and he played sick when I came to his house. Ah, Master Pierre. . . . He killed my sheep and told me they died from hoof-sickness . . . and I saw him take the cloth . . . I mean he swore he never killed them. And his wife swore he was sick and said he never took the cloth. . . . No, that shepherd there. . . . He took the sheep and made out that he was crazy. . . . I don't know what . . .

*The Judge (leaping up).* Keep quiet ; you don't know what you are talking about. You are crazy. I have listened to your idiotic talk about sheep, and cloth, and wool, and money. What is it you want here? Either you answer sensibly, or . . . this is your last chance.

*Patelin.* There is surely something strange about this poor man's talk, and I would advise that a physician be consulted. At times, though, it seems as if he were talking about some money he owes this poor shepherd.

*The Draper.* You thief! You robber! You might at least keep quiet. Where is my cloth? You have it. . . . You are not sick.

*The Judge.* What has he? Who isn't sick? Are you going to talk of your business or not?

*The Draper.* He has it, certain. But I'll speak of this later. Now, I'll attend to this thief, this shepherd.

*Patelin.* This shepherd cannot answer the charges himself, Your Lordship. I will gladly give my services to defend him.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*The Judge.* You won't get much for your pains.

*Patelin.* Ah, but the knowledge that I am doing a kind and honest deed, and then I may be able to stop this haggling which annoys Your Lordship so much.

5 *The Judge.* I'd be greatly thankful.

*The Draper.* You'll defend him . . . you thief . . . you . . .

*The Judge.* Now, Master Guillaume, you keep quiet or I'll have you put in the stocks. I have listened long enough  
10 to your idiotic gab. Proceed, Master Patelin.

*Patelin.* I thank Your Lordship. Now, come on, my good fellow. It's for your own good I am working as you heard me say. Just because I would do you a kind deed. Answer everything well and direct.

15 *The Shepherd.* Ba . . . a . . .

*Patelin.* Come, I am your lawyer, not a lamb.

*The Shepherd.* Ba . . .

*Patelin.* What's Ba . . . ? Are you crazy? Tell me, did this man pay you money for your work?

20 *The Shepherd.* Ba . . .

*Patelin (seemingly losing his temper).* You idiot, answer, it's I, your lawyer, who is talking to you. Answer.

*The Shepherd.* Ba . . .

*The Draper (who has listened open-mouthed and bewildered).*  
25 But, Your Lordship, he can talk when he wants to. He spoke to me this morning.

*Patelin (severely).* Everything happened to you this morning, Master Joceaulme. Now it seems to me, it would

---

LINE 9. *stocks* : a framework with holes in which the arms and legs of offenders were confined, usually in a public place, by way of punishment.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

be far wiser for you to send this shepherd back to his sheep ; he is used to their company far more than to that of men. It does not look as if this fool had sense enough to kill a fly, let alone a sheep.

*The Draper.* You . . . you . . . robber . . . liar!!!<sup>5</sup>

*The Judge.* I honestly think they are both crazy.

*Patelin.* It seems as if Your Lordship is right.

*The Draper.* I am crazy! You scoundrel! You robber! Where is my cloth? They are both thieves. . . .

*The Judge.* Keep quiet, I say. 10

*The Draper.* But, Your Lordship!

*The Judge.* All you get is vexation, in dealing with dolts and idiots, so says the law. To finish this wrangling the court is adjourned.

*The Draper.* And my cloth . . . my money . . . I<sup>15</sup> mean my sheep! Is there no justice? Will you not listen to me?

*The Judge.* Eh, listen to you, you miser? You dare scoff at justice? You hire half crazy people, and then you don't pay them; then you bellow something about cloth<sup>20</sup> which has nothing to do with the case and expect me to listen to you?

*The Draper.* But he took my cloth . . . and he killed my sheep. I swear to you. There he stands, the thief. (*Pointing to Patelin*) 25

*The Judge.* Stop your bellowing. I discharge this half-witted shepherd. Get home and don't ever come in my sight again no matter how many bailiffs summon you.

---

LINE 12. dolts : stupid persons. 18. miser : one who saves and hoards greedily. 19. scoff : jeer ; laugh. 28. bailiffs : sheriff's agents.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*Patelin (to the Shepherd).* Say thanks to His Lordship.

*The Shepherd.* Ba. . . .

*The Judge.* By all the saints, never have I come upon such a nest of idiots!

5 *The Draper.* My cloth gone . . . my sheep. . . .

*The Judge.* Huh! You. . . . Well, I have business elsewhere. May I never see your like again. The court is adjourned. Good day, Master Patelin.

*Patelin.* A joyous day to you.

10 (*All leave except Patelin, the Draper, and the Shepherd.*)

*The Draper.* You thieves . . . you scoundrels! You. . . . You. . . .

*Patelin.* Don't shout yourself hoarse, good Master Joceaulme.

15 *The Draper.* You stole my cloth and played crazy . . . and now it was because of you that I lost my sheep. . . .

*Patelin.* A fine tale! Do you think any one will believe you?

*The Draper.* I am not blind. Didn't I see you dancing  
20 this morning? I saw you. . . .

*Patelin.* Are you so certain? Good sir, it may have been Jean de Noyon. He resembles me very much.

*The Draper.* But I know you when I see you. You screamed and acted mad, shouting a tale of dogs and . . .

25 *Patelin.* Perhaps you imagined it all. Go back to my house and see if I am not *still* there.

*The Draper (looks much puzzled).* I'll go to your house and if I don't find you there, I'll go to the judge and see to it that he listens to my story. I'll get a lawyer from

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

Paris. (*To the Shepherd, who has been standing at a safe distance*) You thief! I'll get you yet. (*To Patelin*) I'll go to your house now.

*Patelin.* That's a wise action.

(*Exit the Draper.*)

5

*Patelin.* Now, Agnelet, my fellow. What do you think of me? Didn't we do a fine piece of work?

*The Shepherd.* Ba . . .

*Patelin.* Yes. Ho, ho — wasn't it great!

*The Shepherd.* Ba . . .

10

*Patelin.* No one is near now; your master is gone. It was a great idea, wasn't it, this legal stroke? You may speak now without fear.

*The Shepherd.* Ba . . .

*Patelin.* I said you could speak without fear, no one is near. Where is the money? 15

*The Shepherd.* Ba . . .

*Patelin.* I can't stay with you all day. What is this game?

*The Shepherd.* Ba . . .

20

*Patelin.* How now? Come, I have business elsewhere.

*The Shepherd.* Ba . . .

*Patelin.* What do you mean? You are not going to pay?

*The Shepherd (with a grin).* Ba . . .

25

*Patelin.* Yes, you played your rôle well, good Agnelet. But now it's over. Next time you may count on me again. Now my money; the six crowns.

*The Shepherd.* Ba . . .

---

LINE 26. rôle: a part taken by an actor.

## The Worthy Master Pierre Patelin

*Patelin* (*sees the game now, stops. In a somewhat pathetic voice*). Is that all I am going to get for my work?

*The Shepherd*. Ba . . .

*Patelin* (*getting furious*). I'll have a bailiff after you, you  
5 thief . . . you scoundrel . . . you robber. . . .

*The Shepherd*. Ho, ho, ho. . . . Ba . . . ! The judge  
said I need never come back. And — ho, ho, ho, I never  
knew you. . . . Ba . . . a . . . ! (*Runs out.*)

*Patelin* (*silent for a time, then grinning pathetically*).  
10 Alas! 'Tis only paying me in my own coin. . . . Never-  
theless 'twas a fine idea. . . . (*Exit.*)

CURTAIN



# ALICE IN WONDERLAND

A DRAMATIZATION OF LEWIS CARROLL'S *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* AND *Through the Looking-Glass*

BY

ALICE GERSTENBERG

*To the Memory of Lewis Carroll*

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## CHARACTERS

LEWIS CARROLL	FROG FOOTMAN
ALICE	DUCHESS
RED QUEEN	CHESHIRE CAT
WHITE QUEEN	KING OF HEARTS
WHITE RABBIT	QUEEN OF HEARTS
HUMPTY DUMPTY	KNAVE OF HEARTS
GRYPHON	CATERPILLAR
MOCK TURTLE	TWO OF SPADES
MAD HATTER	FIVE OF SPADES
MARCH HARE	SEVEN OF SPADES
DORMOUSE	

### ACT I

- SCENE I — Alice's Home  
SCENE II — The Room in the Looking-Glass  
SCENE III — The Hall with Doors  
SCENE IV — The Sea Shore

### ACT II

- SCENE — The March Hare's Garden

### ACT III

- SCENE I — The Garden of Flowers  
SCENE II — The Court of Hearts  
SCENE III — Alice's Home

The play calls for costumes after the illustrations of John Tenniel, and scenery of the simple imaginative type, the "new art" in the theater.

# ALICE IN WONDERLAND

## ACT I

SCENE I: — *Alice's home.* LEWIS CARROLL *is discovered, playing chess. Golden-haired ALICE, in a little blue dress, a black kitten in her arms, stands watching him.*

*Alice.* That's a funny game, Uncle. What did you do then? 5

*Carroll.* A red pawn took a white pawn; this way. You see, Alice, the chess-board is divided into sixty-four squares, red and white, and the white army tries to win and the red army tries to win. It's like a battle!

*Alice.* With soldiers? 10

*Carroll.* Yes, here are the Kings and Queens they are fighting for. That's the Red Queen and here's the White Queen.

*Alice.* How funny they look!

*Carroll.* See the crowns on their heads, and look at 15  
their big feet.

*Alice.* It's a foot apiece, that's what it is! Do they hump along like this?

*Carroll.* Here! You're spoiling the game. I must keep them all in their right squares. 20

*Alice.* I want to be a Queen!

---

LINE 6. **pawn**: in the game of chess, any one of the sixteen men of least value.

## Alice in Wonderland

*Carroll.* Here you are (*He points to a small white pawn*), here you are in your little stiff skirt!

*Alice.* How do you do, Alice!

*Carroll.* And now you are going to move here.

5 *Alice.* Let me move myself.

*Carroll.* When you have traveled all along the board this way and haven't been taken by the enemy you may be a Queen.

*Alice.* Why do people always play with Kings and  
10 Queens? Mother has them in her playing cards too. Look! (*Alice goes to the mantel and takes a pack of playing cards from the ledge.*) Here's the King of Hearts and here's his wife; she's the Queen of Hearts — isn't she cross-looking? wants to bite one's head off. (*Carroll moves a*  
15 *pawn.*) You're playing against yourself, aren't you?

*Carroll.* That's one way of keeping in practice, Alice; I have friends in the University who want to beat me.

*Alice.* But if you play against yourself I should think you'd want to cheat!

20 *Carroll.* Does a nice little girl like you cheat when she plays against herself?

*Alice.* Oh! I *never* do! I'd scold myself hard. I always pretend I'm *two* people too. It's lots of fun, isn't it? Sometimes when I'm all alone I walk up to the looking-  
25 glass and talk to the other Alice. She's so silly, that Alice; she can't do anything by herself. She just mocks me all the time. When I laugh, she laughs; when I point my finger at her, she points her finger at me; and when I stick my tongue out at her, she sticks her tongue out at  
30 me! Kitty has a twin too, haven't you, darling?

(*Alice goes to the mirror to show Kitty her twin.*)

## Alice in Wonderland

*Carroll.* I'll have to write a book some day about Alice — Alice in wonderland, "Child of the pure unclouded brow and dreaming eyes of wonder!" or, Alice through the looking-glass!

*Alice.* Don't you wish sometimes you could go into <sup>5</sup> looking-glass house? See! (*Alice stands on an armchair and looks into the mirror.*) There's the room you can see through the glass; it's just the same as our living-room here, only the things go the other way. I can see all of it — all but the bit just behind the fireplace. Oh! I do <sup>10</sup> wish I could see that bit! I want so much to know if they've a fire there. You never *can* tell, you know, unless our fire smokes. Then smoke comes up in that room too — but that may be just to make it look as if they had a fire — just to pretend they had. The books are something <sup>15</sup> like our books, only the words go the wrong way. Won't there ever be any way of our getting through, Uncle?

*Carroll.* Do you think Kitty would find looking-glass milk digestible?

*Alice.* It doesn't sound awful good, does it? But I <sup>20</sup> might leave her at home. She's been into an awful lot of mischief to-day. She found sister's knitting and chased the ball all over the garden where sister was playing croquet with the neighbors. And I ran and ran after the naughty little thing until I was all out of breath and so <sup>25</sup> tired! I am tired. (*She yawns and makes herself comfortable in the armchair.*)

*Carroll* (*replaces the playing cards on the mantel and consults his watch*). Take a nap. Yes, you have time before tea.

30

*Alice* (*half asleep*). We're going to have mock-turtle

## Alice in Wonderland

soup for supper! I heard mamma tell the cook not to pepper it too much.

Carroll. What a funny little rabbit it is, nibbling all the time!

5 *(He leans gently over the back of her chair, and seeing that she is going to sleep puts out the lamplight and leaves the room. A red glow from the fireplace illumines Alice. Dream music. A bluish\* light reveals the RED CHESS QUEEN and the WHITE CHESS QUEEN in the mirror.)*

10 *Red Queen (points to Alice and says in a mysterious voice). There she is — let's call her over.*

*White Queen.* Do you think she'll come?

*Red Queen.* I'll call softly — Alice!

*White Queen.* Hist, Alice.

15 *Red Queen.* Alice!

*White Queen.* Hush — if she wakes and catches us —

*Both Queens.* Alice, come through into looking-glass house! *(Their hands beckon her.)*

*Alice (rises and talks sleepily. The Queens disappear.*  
20 *Alice climbs from the arm of the chair to the back of another and so on up to the mantel ledge, where she picks her way daintily between the vases). I — don't — know — how — I — can — get — through. I've tried — before — but the glass was hard — and I was afraid of cutting — my*  
25 *fingers — (She feels the glass and is amazed to find it like gauze.) Why, it's soft like gauze; it's turning into a sort of mist; why, it's easy to get through! Why — why — I'm going through!*

*(She disappears.)*

## Alice in Wonderland

SCENE II : — *Is scene i, reversed. The portières are black and red squares, like a chess-board. A soft radiance follows the characters mysteriously. As the curtain rises, ALICE comes through the looking-glass, steps down, looks about in wonderment, and goes to see if there is a "fire."* The RED 5  
QUEEN rises out of the grate and faces her haughtily.

*Alice.* Why, you're the Red Queen!

*Red Queen.* Of course I am! Where do you come from? And where are you going? Look up, speak nicely, and don't twiddle your fingers! 10

*Alice.* I only wanted to see what the looking-glass was like. Perhaps I've lost my way.

*Red Queen.* I don't know what you mean by your way; all the ways about here belong to *me*. Curtsy while you're thinking what to say. It saves time. 15

*Alice.* I'll try it when I go home — the next time I'm a little late for dinner.

*Red Queen.* It's time for you to answer now; open your mouth a *little* wider when you speak, and always say, "Your Majesty." I suppose you don't want to lose 20  
your name?

*Alice.* No, indeed!

*Red Queen.* And yet I don't know, only think how convenient it would be if you could manage to go home without it! For instance, if the governess wanted to call you to 25  
your lessons, she would call out "come here," and there she would have to leave off, because there wouldn't be any name for her to call, and of course you wouldn't have to go, you know.

---

LINE 10. twiddle : swirl.

## Alice in Wonderland

*Alice.* That would never do, I'm sure; the governess would never think of excusing me from lessons for that. If she couldn't remember my name, she'd call me "Miss," as the servants do.

5 *Red Queen.* Well, if she said "Miss," and didn't say anything more, of course you'd miss your lessons. I dare say you can't even read this book.

*Alice.* It's all in some language I don't know. Why, it's a looking-glass book, of course! And if I hold it up to  
10 a glass, the words will all go the right way again.

### *Jabberwocky*

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
15 And the mome raths outgrabe.

It seems very pretty, but it's *rather* hard to understand; somehow it seems to fill my head with ideas — only I don't exactly know what they are.

*Red Queen.* I dare say you don't know your geography  
20 either. Look at the map! (*She takes a right angle course to the portières and points to them with her scepter.*)

*Alice.* It's marked out just like a big chess-board. I wouldn't mind being a pawn, though of course I should like to be a Red Queen best.

25 *Red Queen.* That's easily managed. When you get to the eighth square you'll be a Queen. It's a huge game of chess that's being played — all over the world. Come on, we've got to run. Faster, don't try to talk.

*Alice.* I can't.

30 *Red Queen.* Faster, faster.



## Alice in Wonderland

*Alice.* Are we nearly there?

*Red Queen.* Nearly there! Why, we passed it ten minutes ago. Faster. You may rest a little now.

*Alice.* Why, I do believe we're in the same place. Everything's just as it was. 5

*Red Queen.* Of course it is; what would you have it?

*Alice.* Well, in our country you'd generally get to somewhere else — if you ran very fast for a long time as we've been doing. 10

*Red Queen.* A slow sort of country. Now *here* you see, it takes all the running *you* can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that.

*Alice.* I'd rather not try, please! I'm quite content 15 to stay here — only I *am* so hot and thirsty.

*Red Queen.* I know what you'd like. (*She takes a little box out of her pocket.*) Have a biscuit? (*Alice, not liking to refuse, curtsies as she takes the biscuit and chokes.*) While you're refreshing yourself, I'll just take the meas- 20 urements. (*She takes a ribbon out of her pocket and measures the map with it.*) At the end of two yards I shall give you your directions — have another biscuit?

*Alice.* No, thank you, one's quite enough.

*Red Queen.* Thirst quenched, I hope? At the end of 25 three yards I shall repeat them — for fear of your forgetting them. At the end of *four*, I shall say good-by. And at the end of five, I shall go! That Square belongs to Humpty Dumpty and that Square to the Gryphon and

---

LINE 29. **Gryphon** (grīf'ŭn, usually spelled *griffin*): a fabulous creature, half lion and half eagle. A gryphon is really a

# Alice in Wonderland

Mock Turtle and that Square to the Queen of Hearts.  
But you make no remark?

Alice. I — I didn't know I had to make one — just then.

5 Red Queen. You *should* have said, "It's extremely kind of you to tell me all this"; however, we'll suppose it said. Four! Good-by! Five!

*(Red Queen vanishes in a gust of wind behind the portières.*

Rabbit music. WHITE RABBIT comes out of the fireplace and  
10 walks about the room hurriedly. He wears a checked coat, carries white kid gloves in one hand, a fan in the other, and takes out his watch to look at it anxiously.)

White Rabbit. Oh, the Duchess! the Duchess! Oh! won't she be savage if I've kept her waiting!

15 Alice. I've never seen a rabbit with a waistcoat and a watch! And a waistcoat pocket! If you please, sir —  
White Rabbit. Oh!

*(He drops fan and gloves in fright, and dashes out by way of the portières, in a gust of wind. Alice picks up the fan*  
20 *and playfully puts on the gloves. The portières flap in the breeze and a shawl flies in.)*

Alice *(catches the shawl and looks about for the owner; then meets the WHITE QUEEN)*. I'm very glad I happened to be in the way.

25 White Queen *(runs in wildly, both arms stretched out wide as if she were flying, and cries in a helpless, frightened way)*. Bread-and-butter, bread-and-butter.

---

terrible dream monster that may be as terrible as you like, and of any size and shape that you wish.

## Alice in Wonderland

*Alice.* Am I addressing the White Queen?

*White Queen.* Well, yes, if you call that a-dressing. It isn't my notion of the thing, at all.

*Alice.* If your Majesty will only tell me the right way to begin, I'll do it as well as I can. 5

*White Queen.* But I don't want it done at all. I've been a-dressing myself for the last two hours.

*Alice.* Every single thing's crooked, and you're all over pins; may I put your shawl straight for you?

*White Queen.* I don't know what's the matter with it! 10 It's out of temper. I've pinned it here, and I've pinned it there, but there's no pleasing it.

*Alice.* It *can't* go straight, you know, if you pin it all on one side, and dear me, what a state your hair is in!

*White Queen.* The brush has got entangled in it! And 15 I lost the comb yesterday.

*Alice* (*takes out the brush and arranges the Queen's hair*). You look better now! But really you should have a lady's maid!

*White Queen.* I'm sure I'll take you with pleasure. 20 Two pence a week and jam every other day.

*Alice* (*who cannot help laughing*). I don't want you to hire *me* — and I don't care for jam.

*White Queen.* It's very good jam.

*Alice.* Well, I don't want any to-day, at any rate. 25

*White Queen.* You couldn't have it if you *did* want it. The rule is, jam to-morrow and jam yesterday — but never jam to-day.

*Alice.* It must come sometimes to "jam to-day."

---

LINE 21. pence (plural of *penny*). A penny is an English coin worth about two cents.

## Alice in Wonderland

*White Queen.* No, it can't — it's jam every *other* day; to-day isn't any *other* day, you know.

~ *Alice.* I don't understand you — it's dreadfully confusing!

5 *White Queen.* That's the effect of living backwards — always makes one a little giddy at first —

*Alice.* Living backwards! I never heard of such a thing!

*White Queen.* But there's one great advantage in it —  
10 that one's memory works both ways.

*Alice.* I'm sure *mine* works only one way. I can't remember things before they happen.

*White Queen.* It's a poor sort of memory that works only backwards.

15 *Alice.* What sort of things do you remember best?

*White Queen.* Oh, things that happened the week after next. For instance now: (*She sticks a large piece of plaster on her finger.*) There's the King's messenger — he's in prison being punished; and the trial doesn't even  
20 begin until next Wednesday; and of course the crime comes last of all.

*Alice.* Suppose he never commits the crime?

*White Queen* (*binding the plaster with ribbon*). That would be all the better, wouldn't it?

25 *Alice.* Of course it would be all the better, but it wouldn't be all the better his being punished.

*White Queen.* You're wrong *there*, at any rate; were you ever punished?

*Alice.* Only for faults.

30 *White Queen.* And you were all the better for it, I know!

## Alice in Wonderland

Alice. Yes, but then I *had* done the things I was punished for; that makes all the difference.

White Queen. But if you hadn't done them that would have been better still; better and better and better!

Alice. There's a mistake somewhere —

5

White Queen (*screams like an engine whistle, and shakes her hand*). Oh, Oh, Oh! My finger's bleeding. Oh, Oh, Oh!

Alice. What is the matter? Have you pricked your finger?

10

White Queen. I haven't pricked it yet — but I soon shall — Oh, Oh, Oh!

Alice. When do you expect to do it?

White Queen. When I fasten my shawl again; the brooch will come undone directly. Oh, oh!

15

(*Brooch flies open and she clutches it wildly.*)

Alice. Take care! you're holding it all crooked!

White Queen (*pricks her finger and smiles*). That accounts for the bleeding, you see; now you understand the way things happen here.

20

Alice. But why don't you scream now?

White Queen. Why, I've done all the screaming already. What would be the good of having it all over again? Oh! it's time to run if you want to stay in the same place! Come on!

25

Alice. No, no! Not so fast! I'm getting dizzy!!

White Queen. Faster, faster!

Alice. Everything's black before my eyes!

(*There is music, and the sound of rushing wind, and in the darkness the White Queen cries: "Faster, faster";*

30

## Alice in Wonderland

*Alice gasps*: "I can't — please stop"; *and the Queen replies*: "Then you can't stay in the same place. I'll have to drop you behind. Faster — faster, good-by.")

SCENE III: — *When the curtain rises one sees nothing but*  
5 *odd black lanterns with orange lights, hanging, presumably,*  
*from the sky. The scene lights up, slowly revealing ALICE*  
*seated on two large cushions. She has been "dropped*  
*behind" by the White Queen, and is dazed to find herself in a*  
*strange hall, with many peculiar doors, and knobs too high*  
10 *to reach.*

*Alice*. Oh! my head! Where am I? Oh dear, oh dear! (*She staggers up and to her amazement finds herself smaller than the table.*) I've never been smaller than any table before! I've always been able to reach the knobs!  
15 What a curious feeling. Oh! I'm shrinking. It's the fan — the gloves! (*She throws them away, feels her head and measures herself against table and doors.*) Oh! saved in time! But I never — never —

*White Rabbit (entering)*. Oh! my fan and gloves!  
20 Where are my —

*Alice*. Oh! Mr. Rabbit — please help me out — I want to go home — I want to go home —

*White Rabbit*. Oh! the Duchess! Oh! my fur and whiskers! She'll get me executed, as sure as ferrets are  
25 ferrets! Oh! *you* have them!

*Alice*. I'm sorry — you dropped them, you know —

---

LINE 24. as sure as ferrets are ferrets : as sure as sure. Ferrets are weasels about fourteen inches long. They hunt their prey, rabbits and rats, with much persistence. Hunters sometimes keep trained ferrets to help them search for rabbits.

## Alice in Wonderland

*White Rabbit (picks up fan and gloves and patters off).*  
She'll chop off your head!

*Alice.* If you please, sir — where am I? — won't you please — tell me how to get out — I want to get out —

*White Rabbit (looking at his watch).* Oh! my ears and whiskers, how late it's getting!

*(A trap-door gives way and Rabbit disappears. Alice dashes after, only in time to have the trap-door bang in her face.)*

*Alice (amazed).* It's a rabbit-hole — I'm small enough <sup>10</sup> to fit it too! If I shrink any more it might end in my going out altogether like a candle. I wonder what I would be like then! What does the flame of a candle look like after the candle is blown out? I've never seen such a thing! 15

*Humpty Dumpty (sits on the wall).* Don't stand chattering to yourself like that, but tell me your name and your business.

*Alice.* My name is Alice, but —

*Humpty Dumpty.* It's a stupid name enough — what <sup>20</sup> does it mean?

*Alice.* Must a name mean something?

*Humpty Dumpty.* Of course it must; *my* name means the shape I am — and a good, handsome shape it is, too. With a name like yours, you might be any shape, almost. <sup>25</sup>

*Alice.* You're Humpty Dumpty! Just like an egg.

*Humpty Dumpty.* It's *very* provoking, to be called an egg — *very*.

*Alice.* I said you *looked* like an egg, sir, and some eggs are very pretty, you know. 30

## Alice in Wonderland

*Humpty Dumpty.* Some people have no more sense than a baby.

*Alice.* Why do you sit here all alone?

*Humpty Dumpty.* Why, because there's nobody with me. Did you think I didn't know the answer to *that*? Ask another.

*Alice.* Don't you think you'd be safer down on the ground? That wall's so very narrow.

*Humpty Dumpty.* What tremendously easy riddles you ask! Of course I don't think so. Take a good look at me! I'm one that has spoken to a king, I am; to show you I'm not proud, you may shake hands with me! (*He leans forward to offer Alice his hand, but she is too small to reach it.*) However, this conversation is going on a little too fast; let's go back to the last remark but one.

*Alice.* I'm afraid I can't remember it.

*Humpty Dumpty.* In that case we start fresh, and it's my turn to choose a subject.

*Alice.* You talk about it just as if it were a game.

*Humpty Dumpty.* So here's a question for you. How old did you say you were?

*Alice.* Seven years and six months.

*Humpty Dumpty.* Wrong! You never said a word about it. Now, if you'd asked *my* advice, I'd have said, "Leave off at seven — but —"

*Alice.* I never ask advice about growing.

*Humpty Dumpty.* Too proud?

*Alice.* What a beautiful belt you've got on. At least, a beautiful cravat, I should have said — no, a belt, I mean — I beg your pardon. If only I knew which was neck and which was waist.



## Alice in Wonderland

*Humpty Dumpty.* It is a — *most* — *provoking* — thing, when a person doesn't know a cravat from a belt.

*Alice.* I know it's very ignorant of me.

*Humpty Dumpty.* It's a cravat, child, and a beautiful one, as you say. There's glory for you. 5

*Alice.* I don't know what you mean by "glory."

*Humpty Dumpty.* When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean — neither more nor less.

*Alice.* The question is, whether you *can* make words mean different things. 10

*Humpty Dumpty.* The question is, which is to be master — that's all. Impenetrability! That's what I say!

*Alice.* Would you tell me, please, what that means?

*Humpty Dumpty.* I meant by "impenetrability" that we've had enough of that subject, and it would be just as 15 well if you'd mention what you mean to do next, as I suppose you don't mean to stop here all the rest of your life.

*Alice.* That's a great deal to make one word mean.

*Humpty Dumpty.* When I make a word do a lot of work like that I always pay it extra. 20

*Alice.* Oh!

*Humpty Dumpty.* Ah, you should see 'em come round me of a Saturday night, for to get their wages, you know. That's all — Good-by.

*Alice.* Good-by till we meet again. 25

*Humpty Dumpty.* I shouldn't know you again, if we *did* meet, you're so exactly like other people.

*Alice.* The face is what one goes by, generally.

*Humpty Dumpty.* That's just what I complain of.

---

LINE 12. **Impenetrability** (ĩm-pěn'ê-tră-bĩl'ĩ-tĩ): a quality of that which cannot be understood.

## Alice in Wonderland

Your face is the same everybody has — the two eyes — so — nose in the middle, mouth under. It's always the same. Now, if you had the two eyes on the same side of the nose, for instance — or the mouth at the top — that would be some help.

Alice. It wouldn't look nice.

Humpty Dumpty. Wait till you've tried! Good-by.  
(He disappears as he came.)

Alice. Oh! I forgot to ask him how to — (She tries to  
10 open the doors. They are all locked; she begins to weep.  
She walks weeping to a high glass table, and sits down on its  
lower ledge. She sits on a big golden key and picks it up in  
surprise. She tries it on all the doors but it does not fit.  
She weeps and weeps — and Wonderland grows dark to her  
15 in her despair. In the darkness she cries, "Oh! I'm slipping!  
Oh, oh! it's a lake. Oh! my tears! I'm floating!"  
A mysterious light shows a "Drink me" sign around a bottle  
on the top of the table. Alice floats up to it, panting, and  
holding on to the edge of the table, takes up the bottle.) It  
20 isn't marked poison. (She sips at it.) This is good!  
Tastes like cherry tart, custard, pineapple, roast turkey,  
toffy, and hot buttered toast — all together. Oh! Oh!  
I'm letting out like a telescope. (A mysterious light shows  
her lengthening out. Music) But the lake is rising, too.  
25 Oh! Oh! it's deep! I'm drowning. Help, help, I'm  
drowning, I'm drowning in my tears!

Gryphon. Hjckrrh. Hjckrrh!

(The GRYPHON, a huge green creature, with big glittering  
wings, appears where Humpty Dumpty had been, and  
30 reaches glittering claws over to grab and save Alice.)

---

LINE 22. toffy : taffy.

## Alice in Wonderland

SCENE IV : — *Is symbolic of a wet and rocky shore in a weird green light. The MOCK TURTLE is weeping dismally.*

*Gryphon.* Hjckrrh. Hjckrrh. Hjckrrh.

*(Mock Turtle answers with his weeping.)*

*Gryphon (drags Alice in).* Drop your tears into the sea with his.

*Alice.* He sobs as if he had a bone in his throat. He sighs as if his heart would break. What is his sorrow?

*Mock Turtle.* Oh, Gryphon, it's terrible!

*Gryphon.* It's all his fancy that. Mock Turtle hasn't got no sorrow. This here young lady, she wants for to know your history, she do.

*Mock Turtle.* I'll tell it her. Sit down, both of you, and don't speak a word till I've finished.

*Alice.* I don't see how you can *ever* finish, if you don't begin.

*Mock Turtle.* Once, I was a real Turtle. (*A long silence is broken by the exclamations, "Hjckrrh," of the Gryphon, and the heavy sobbing of the Mock Turtle.*) When we were little, we went to school in the sea. The master was an old Turtle — we used to call him Tortoise —

*Alice.* Why did you call him Tortoise, if he wasn't one?

*Mock Turtle.* We called him Tortoise because he taught us; really you are very dull.

*Gryphon.* You ought to be ashamed of yourself for asking such a simple question. Drive on, old fellow! Don't be all day about it!

*Mock Turtle.* Yes, we went to school in the sea, though you mayn't believe it —

## Alice in Wonderland

*Alice.* I never said I didn't.

*Mock Turtle.* You did.

*Gryphon.* Hold your tongue!

*Mock Turtle.* We had the best of educations — in fact,  
5 we went to school every day.

*Alice.* I've been to a day school, too; you needn't be so proud as all that.

*Mock Turtle.* With extras?

*Alice.* Yes, we learned French and music.

10 *Mock Turtle.* And washing?

*Alice.* Certainly not!

*Mock Turtle.* Ah! Then yours wasn't a really good school. Now at *ours* they had at the end of the bill, French, music, *and washing* — extra.

15 *Alice.* You couldn't have wanted it much; living at the bottom of the sea.

*Mock Turtle.* I couldn't afford to learn it — I took only the regular course.

*Alice.* What was that?

20 *Mock Turtle.* Reeling and writhing, of course, to begin with — and then the different branches of Arithmetic — Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision.

*Alice.* I never heard of Uglification. What is it?

*Gryphon.* Never heard of uglifying! You know what  
25 to beautify is, I suppose?

*Alice.* Yes, it means — to — make — anything — prettier.

*Gryphon.* Well, then, if you don't know what to uglify is, you *are* a simpleton.

30 *Alice.* What else had you to learn?

*Mock Turtle.* Well, there was Mystery; Mystery,

## Alice in Wonderland

ancient and modern, with Seaography, then Drawling — the Drawling-master was an old conger-eel, that used to come once a week; what *he* taught us was Drawling, Stretching, and Fainting in Coils.

*Alice.* What was *that* like?

5

*Mock Turtle.* Well, I can't show it you, myself. I'm too stiff. And the Gryphon never learned it.

*Gryphon.* Hadn't time; I went to the Classical master, though. He was an old crab, *he* was.

*Mock Turtle.* I never went to him; he taught Laughing 10 and Grief, they used to say.

*Gryphon.* So he did, so he did.

*Alice.* And how many hours a day did you do lessons?

*Mock Turtle.* Ten hours the first day, nine the next, and so on.

15

*Alice.* What a curious plan!

*Gryphon.* That's the reason they're called lessons, because they lessen from day to day.

*Alice.* Then the eleventh day must have been a holiday?

*Mock Turtle.* Of course it was.

20

*Alice.* And how did you manage on the twelfth?

*Gryphon.* That's enough about lessons — tell her something about the games now.

(*Mock Turtle sighs deeply, draws back of one flapper across his eyes. He looks at Alice and tries to speak, but 25 sobs choke his voice. Gryphon punches him in the back.*)

*Gryphon.* Same as if he had a bone in his throat.

*Mock Turtle* (with tears running down his cheeks). You may not have lived much under the sea —

---

LINE 2. conger-eel : a marine eel from four to ten feet long.

## Alice in Wonderland

*Alice.* I haven't.

*Mock Turtle.* And perhaps you were never even introduced to a lobster.

*Alice.* I once tasted — no, never!

5 *Mock Turtle.* So you can have no idea what a delightful thing a Lobster Quadrille is.

*Alice.* No, indeed. What sort of dance is it?

*Gryphon.* Why, you first form into a line along the seashore.

10 *Mock Turtle.* Two lines; seals, turtles, salmon, and so on; then, when you've cleared all the jellyfish out of the way —

*Gryphon.* That generally takes some time.

*Mock Turtle.* You advance twice —

15 *Gryphon.* Each with a lobster as a partner.

*Mock Turtle.* Of course, advance twice, set to partners.

*Gryphon.* Change lobsters, and retire in same order.

*Mock Turtle.* Then you know, you throw the —

*Gryphon.* The lobsters!

20 *Mock Turtle.* As far out to sea as you can —

*Gryphon.* Swim after them!

*Mock Turtle.* Turn a somersault in the sea.

*Gryphon.* Change lobsters again!

*Mock Turtle.* Back to land again, and — that's all the  
25 first figure.

*Alice.* It must be a very pretty dance.

*Mock Turtle.* Would you like to see a little of it?

*Alice.* Very much indeed.

*Mock Turtle.* Come, let's try the first figure. We  
30 can do it without lobsters, you know; which shall sing?

*Gryphon.* Oh, you sing — I've forgotten the words.

## Alice in Wonderland

(Creatures solemnly dance round and round Alice, treading on her toes, waving fore-paws to mark time, while Mock Turtle sings.)

### First Verse

"Will you walk a little faster!" said a whiting to a snail, 5  
"There's a porpoise close behind us, and he's treading on my tail.

See how eagerly the lobsters and the turtles all advance!  
They are waiting on the shingle — will you come and  
join the dance? 10

Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will you join the  
dance?

Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, won't you join  
the dance?

### Second Verse

"You can really have no notion how delightful it will be  
When they take us up and throw us, with the lobsters, out  
to sea!"

But the snail replied, "Too far, too far!" and gave a look  
askance — 20

Said he thanked the whiting kindly, but he would not  
join the dance.

Would not, could not, would not, could not, would not  
join the dance.

Would not, could not, would not, could not, could not 25  
join the dance.

---

LINE 5. **whiting**: any of the various marine food fishes.  
9. **shingle**: coarse gravel on the seashore.

## Alice in Wonderland

(*The Creatures dance against Alice, pushing her back and forth between them. She protests and finally escapes; they bump against one another.*)

Alice. Thank you; it's a very interesting dance to watch, and I do so like that curious song about the whiting.

Mock Turtle. Oh, as to the whiting, they — you've seen them, of course?

Alice. Yes, I've often seen them at din — (*Checks herself hastily.*)

10 Mock Turtle. I don't know where Din may be, but if you've seen them so often, of course you know what they're like.

Alice. I believe so — they have their tails in their mouths — and they're all over crumbs.

15 Mock Turtle. You're wrong about the crumbs — crumbs would all wash off in the sea. But they *have* their tails in their mouths; and the reason is — (*Mock Turtle yawns and shuts his eyes.*) Tell her about the reason and all that.

20 Gryphon. The reason is, that they *would* go with the lobsters to the dance. So they got thrown out to sea. So they had to fall a long way. So they got their tails fast in their mouths. So they couldn't get them out again. That's all.

25 Alice. Thank you, it's very interesting. I never knew so much about a whiting before.

Gryphon. I can tell you more than that, if you like. Do you know why it's called a whiting?

Alice. I never thought about it. Why?

30 Gryphon. *It does the boots and shoes.*

Alice. Does the boots and shoes!



## Alice in Wonderland

*Gryphon.* Why, what are *your* shoes done with? I mean, what makes them so shiny?

*Alice.* They're done with blacking, I believe.

*Gryphon.* Boots and shoes, under the sea, are done with whiting. Now you know. 5

*Alice.* And what are they made of?

*Gryphon.* Soles and eels, of course; any shrimp could have told you that.

*Alice.* If I'd been the whiting, I'd have said to the porpoise, "Keep back, please; we don't want *you* with us." 10

*Mock Turtle.* They were obliged to have him with them — no wise fish would go anywhere without a porpoise.

*Alice.* Wouldn't it really?

*Mock Turtle.* Of course not; why, if a fish came to me and told me he was going a journey, I should say, "With 15 what porpoise?"

*Alice.* Don't you mean purpose?

*Mock Turtle.* I mean what I say.

*Gryphon.* Shall we try another figure of the Lobster Quadrille? Or would you like the Mock Turtle to sing 20 you a song?

*Alice.* Oh, a song, please, if the Mock Turtle would be so kind.

*Gryphon.* Um! No accounting for tastes! Sing her "Turtle Soup," will you, old fellow? 25

*Mock Turtle* (*sighs deeply and, sometimes choked with sobs, sings*).

"Beautiful Soup, so rich and green,  
Waiting in a hot tureen!

---

LINE 29. **tureen** : a large deep vessel to hold soup.

## Alice in Wonderland

Who for such dainties would not stoop?  
Soup of the evening, beautiful Soup!  
Soup of the evening, beautiful Soup!  
Beau — ootiful Soo — op,  
5 Beau — ootiful Soo — oop,  
Soo — oop of the e-e-evening,  
Beautiful, beautiful Soup."

*White Rabbit (enters, stretching out a red and white checked sash with which he separates Alice from the Creatures).*  
10 Check!

*Mock Turtle.* They won't let her stay in our square.

*White Rabbit.* The Queen is coming this way.

*Gryphon.* She'll chop our heads off. Come on, come on, let's fly!

15 *(The Mock Turtle and Gryphon grab Alice and fly into the air.)*

### CURTAIN

*(The curtain rises to reveal small silhouettes of the GRYPHON, MOCK TURTLE, and ALICE in an orange-colored moon far away in the sky. Down below the WHITE RABBIT*  
20 *is shouting to them, "You'll be safe in the March Hare's garden.")*

### CURTAIN

---

LINE 20. **March Hare.** Someone tells us that a hare in March is very happy and scatter-brained. Therefore, when a person is peculiar, and perhaps non-dependable, we say that he is as mad as a March Hare.

# Alice in Wonderland

## ACT II

SCENE :— *The March Hare's garden, showing part of the Duchess' house. On a small platform there is a tea table, set with many cups, continuing into wings to give impression of limitless length. The MARCH HARE, HATTER, and DORMOUSE are crowded at one end. ALICE sits on the 5 ground, where she has been dropped from the sky. Finding herself not bruised, she rises and approaches the table.*

*March Hare and Hatter.* No room! No room!

*Alice.* There's plenty of room! (*She sits in a large arm-chair at one end of the table.*) I don't know who you are. 10

*March Hare.* I am the March Hare, that's the Hatter, and this is the Dormouse. Have some wine?

*Alice.* I don't see any wine.

*March Hare.* There isn't any.

*Alice.* Then it wasn't very civil of you to offer it. 15

*March Hare.* It wasn't very civil of you to sit down without being invited.

*Alice.* I didn't know it was *your* table; it's laid for a great many more than three.

*Hatter.* Your hair wants cutting. 20

*Alice.* You should learn not to make personal remarks; it's very rude.

*Hatter.* Why is a raven like a writing-desk?

*Alice.* Come, we shall have some fun now! I'm glad you've begun asking riddles — I believe I can guess that. 25

---

LINE 4. **Hatter**: one who sells hats. 5. **Dormouse**: sleeping mouse; a mouse that sleeps, or lies dormant, through the winter.

## Alice in Wonderland

*March Hare.* So you mean that you think you can find out the answer to it?

*Alice.* Exactly so.

*March Hare.* Then you should say what you mean.

5 *Alice.* I do; at least — at least I mean what I say — that's the same thing, you know.

*Hatter.* Not the same thing a bit! Why, you might just as well say that "I see what I eat" is the same thing as "I eat what I see!"

10 *March Hare.* You might just as well say that "I like what I get" is the same thing as "I get what I like."

*Dormouse.* You might just as well say that "I breathe when I sleep" is the same thing as "I sleep when I  
15 breathe."

*Hatter.* It is the same thing with you. (*Takes out his watch, looks at it uneasily, shakes it, holds it to his ear.*) What day of the month is it?

*Alice.* The fourth.

20 *Hatter.* Two days wrong. I told you butter wouldn't suit the works!

*March Hare.* It was the *best* butter.

*Hatter.* Yes, but some crumbs must have got in as well; you shouldn't have put it in with the bread-knife —

25 *March Hare* (*takes the watch, looks at it gloomily, dips it into his cup of tea, and looks at it again, but doesn't know what else to say*). It was the *best* butter, you know.

*Alice.* What a funny watch! It tells the day of the month, and doesn't tell what o'clock it is.

30 *Hatter.* Why should it? Does *your* watch tell you what year it is?

## Alice in Wonderland

*Alice.* Of course not, but that's because it stays the same year for such a long time together.

*Hatter.* Which is just the case with *mine*.

*Alice.* I don't quite understand you. What you said had no sort of meaning in it and yet it was certainly 5 English.

*Hatter* (*pouring some hot tea on the Dormouse's nose*).  
The Dormouse is asleep again.

*Dormouse.* Of course, of course, just what I was going to remark myself. 10

*Hatter.* Have you guessed the riddle yet?

*Alice.* No, I give it up — what's the answer?

*Hatter.* I haven't the slightest idea.

*March Hare.* Nor I.

*Alice.* I think you might do something better with 15 the time than wasting it in asking riddles that have no answers.

*Hatter.* If you knew Time as well as I do, you wouldn't talk about wasting *it*. It's *him*.

*Alice.* I don't know what you mean. 20

*Hatter.* Of course you don't. I dare say you never even spoke to Time.

*Alice.* Perhaps not, but I know I have to beat time when I learn music.

*Hatter.* Ah, that accounts for it. He won't stand 25 beating. Now, if you only kept on good terms with him, he'd do almost anything you liked with the clock. For instance, suppose it were nine o'clock in the morning, just time to begin lessons. You'd only have to whisper a hint to Time, and round goes the clock in a twinkling! Half 30 past one, time for dinner.

# Alice in Wonderland

*March Hare.* I only wish it was.

*Alice.* That would be grand, certainly, but then — I shouldn't be hungry for it, you know.

*Hatter.* Not at first, perhaps, but you could keep it to 5 half past one as long as you liked.

*Alice.* Is that the way *you* manage?

*Hatter.* Not I — we quarreled last March — just before *he* went mad, you know. It was at the great concert given by the Queen of Hearts, and I had to sing —

10                   “Twinkle, twinkle, little bat!  
                      How I wonder what you're at!”

You know the song, perhaps.

*Alice.* I've heard something like it.

*Dormouse.* Twinkle, twinkle, twinkle —

15 *Hatter.* Well, I'd hardly finished the first verse when the Queen bawled out, “He's murdering the time! Off with his head!”

*Alice.* How dreadfully savage!

*Hatter.* And ever since that, he won't do a thing I 20 ask! It's always six o'clock now.

*Alice.* Is that the reason so many tea-things are put out here?

*Hatter.* Yes, that's it; it's always tea time, and we've no time to wash the things between whiles.

25 *Alice.* Then you keep moving round, I suppose?

*Hatter.* Exactly so, as the things get used up.

*Alice.* But when you come to the beginning again?

*March Hare.* Suppose we change the subject. I vote the young lady tells us a story.

30 *Alice.* I'm afraid I don't know one.

## Alice in Wonderland

*March Hare and Hatter.* Then the Dormouse shall. Wake up, Dormouse. (*They pinch him on both sides at once.*)

*Dormouse* (*opens his eyes slowly and says, in a hoarse, feeble voice*). I wasn't asleep; I heard every word you 5 fellows were saying.

*March Hare.* Tell us a story.

*Alice.* Yes, please do!

*Hatter.* And be quick about it, or you'll be asleep again before it's done. 10

*Dormouse.* Once upon a time there were three little sisters, and their names were Elsie, Lacie, and Tillie, and they lived at the bottom of a well —

*Alice.* What did they live on?

*Dormouse.* They lived on treacle. 15

*Alice.* They couldn't have done that, you know — they'd have been ill.

*Dormouse.* So they were, *very* ill.

*Alice.* But why did they live at the bottom of a well?

*March Hare.* Take some more tea. 20

*Alice.* I've had nothing yet, so I can't take more.

*Hatter.* You mean, you can't take *less*; it's very easy to take *more* than nothing.

*Alice.* Nobody asked *your* opinion.

*Hatter.* Who's making personal remarks now? 25

*Alice* (*helps herself to tea and bread and butter*). Why did they live at the bottom of a well?

*Dormouse* (*takes a minute or two to think*). It was a treacle-well.

*Alice.* There's no such a thing! 30

---

LINE 15. **treacle** (trē'k'l): molasses.

# Alice in Wonderland

*Hatter and March Hare.* Sh! Sh!

*Dormouse.* If you can't be civil, you'd better finish the story for yourself.

*Alice (very humbly).* No, please go on. I won't interrupt you again. I dare say there may be *one*.

*Dormouse.* One, indeed! And so these three little sisters — they were learning to draw, you know —

*Alice.* What did they draw?

*Dormouse.* Treacle.

10 *Hatter.* I want a clean cup. Let's all move one place on.

*(Hatter moves on, Dormouse takes his place, March Hare takes Dormouse's place, and Alice unwillingly takes March Hare's place.)*

15 *Alice.* I'm worse off than I was before. You've upset the milk jug into your plate.

*March Hare.* It wasn't very civil of you to sit down without being invited.

*Alice.* Where did they draw the treacle from?

20 *Hatter.* You can draw water out of a water-well, so I should think you could draw treacle out of a treacle-well — eh? stupid?

*Alice.* But they were *in* the well.

*Dormouse.* Of course they were — well in. They were  
25 learning to draw, and they drew all manner of things — everything that begins with an M—

*Alice.* Why with an M?

*March Hare.* Why not?

*(Alice is silent and confused. Hatter pinches Dormouse  
30 to wake him up.)*



## Alice in Wonderland

*Dormouse (wakes with a little shriek and continues).*— that begins with an M, such as mouse-traps and the moon and memory and muchness — you know you say things are “much of a muchness” — did you ever see such a thing as a drawing of a muchness? 5

*Hatter.* Did you?

*Alice.* Really, now you ask me, I don't think —

*Hatter.* Then you shouldn't talk.

*March Hare.* No!

*Alice (rises and walks away).* You are very rude. It's 10 the stupidest tea party I ever was at in all my life —

(WHITE RABBIT enters, carrying a huge envelope with a seal and crown on it.)

*March Hare and Hatter.* No room! no room!

(Rabbit pays no attention to them but goes to the house and 15 raps loudly. A Footman in livery, with a round face and large eyes like a frog, and powdered hair, opens the door.)

*White Rabbit.* For the Duchess. An invitation from the Queen to play croquet.

*Frog.* From the Queen. An invitation for the Duch- 20 ess to play croquet.

(White Rabbit bows and goes out.)

*March Hare and Hatter (to White Rabbit).* No room! No room! No room!

(The Frog disappears into the house, but leaves the door 25 open. There is a terrible din, and many saucepans fly out.)

*March Hare.* She's at it again.

*Hatter.* It's perfectly disgusting.

# Alice in Wonderland

*March Hare.* Let's move on.

*(The platform moves off with table, chairs, March Hare, Hatter, and Dormouse. Meanwhile, the FROG has come out again and is sitting near the closed door, staring stupidly at the sky. Alice goes to the door timidly and knocks.)*

*Frog.* There's no sort of use in knocking, and that for two reasons: first, because I'm on the same side of the door as you are; secondly, because they're making such a noise inside, no one could possibly hear you.

10 *Alice.* Please then, how am I to get in?

*Frog.* There might be some sense in your knocking if we had the door between us. For instance, if you were *inside*, you might knock, and I could let you out, you know.

*Alice.* How am I to get in?

15 *Frog.* I shall sit here, till to-morrow.

*(The door opens and a large plate skims out straight at the Frog's head; it grazes his nose and breaks into pieces. Frog acts as if nothing had happened.)*

*Frog.* Or next day, maybe.

20 *Alice.* How am I to get in?

*Frog.* Are you to get in at all? That's the first question, you know.

*Alice.* It's really dreadful the way all you creatures argue. It's enough to drive one crazy.

25 *Frog.* I shall sit here, on and off, for days and days.

*Alice.* But what am I to do?

*Frog.* Anything you like. *(He begins to whistle.)*

*Alice.* Where's the servant whose business it is to answer the door?

## Alice in Wonderland

*Frog.* Which door?

*Alice.* *This* door, of course!

*(The Frog looks at the door, and rubs his thumb on it to see if the paint will come off.)*

*Frog.* To answer the door? What's it been asking 5  
for?

*Alice.* I don't know what you mean.

*Frog.* I speaks English, doesn't I? Or are you deaf?  
What did it ask you?

*Alice.* Nothing! I've been knocking at it. 10

*Frog.* Shouldn't do that — shouldn't do that — vexes  
it, you know. *(He kicks the door.)* You let *it* alone, and  
it'll let *you* alone, you know.

*Alice.* Oh, there's no use talking to you —

*(She starts to open the door just as the DUCHESS comes 15  
out carrying a pig in baby's clothes. She sneezes — Frog  
sneezes and Alice sneezes.)*

*Duchess.* If everybody minded her own business —  
*(She sneezes.)*

*Alice.* It's pepper. 20

*Duchess.* Of course, my cook puts it in the soup.

*Alice.* There's certainly too much pepper in the soup.

*Duchess.* Sneeze then and get rid of it! *(Duchess begins  
to sing to the Baby, giving it a violent shake at the end of  
every line of the lullaby.)* 25

“Speak roughly to your little boy,  
And beat him when he sneezes;

*(Frog and Alice sneeze.)*

## Alice in Wonderland

He only does it to annoy,  
Because he knows it teases.

*(Duchess sneezes, Frog sneezes, Alice sneezes.)*

I speak severely to my boy,  
I beat him when he sneezes;

*(Frog sneezes, Alice sneezes.)*

For he can thoroughly enjoy  
The pepper when he pleases!"

*(Duchess sneezes, Frog sneezes, Alice sneezes; Duchess  
10 gasps and gives a tremendous sneeze.)*

*Alice.* Oh dear! *(She jumps aside as kettles and pots  
come flying out of the door. The Duchess pays no attention.)*  
What a cook to have! *(She calls inside.)* Oh! please  
mind what you're doing! *(Another pan comes out and  
15 almost hits the Baby.)* Oh! there goes his precious nose!

*Duchess.* If everybody minded her own business, the  
world would go round a deal faster than it does.

*Alice.* Which would not be an advantage. Just think  
what work it would make with the day and night! You  
20 see the earth takes twenty-four hours to turn round on its  
axis —

*Duchess.* Talking of axes, chop off her head!

*(The head of a grinning CHESHIRE CAT appears in a tree  
above a wall.)*

---

LINE 23. **Cheshire** (chěsh'ir) **Cat.** A shire is a county. Cheshire is the name of a county in England. It is said that a Cheshire farmer once printed a grinning cat on each pound of butter that he took to market, and, ever since, we have heard of the "grinning Cheshire Cat."

## Alice in Wonderland

*Alice.* Oh, what's that?

*Duchess.* Cat, of course.

*Alice.* Why does it grin like that?

*Duchess.* It's a Cheshire cat! and that's why. (*To Baby*) Pig! 5

*Alice.* I didn't know that Cheshire cats always grinned; in fact, I didn't know that cats *could* grin.

*Duchess.* They all can and most of 'em do.

*Alice.* I don't know of any that do.

*Duchess.* You don't know much and that's a fact. 10  
Here, you may nurse it a bit, if you like! (*Flings the Baby at Alice.*) I must go and get ready to play croquet with the Queen. (*She goes into the house.*)

*Alice.* If I don't take this child away with me, they're sure to kill it in a day or two. Cheshire Puss, would 15  
you tell me, please, which way I ought to walk from here?

*Cat.* That depends a good deal on where you want to get to.

*Alice.* I don't much care where — 20

*Cat.* Then it doesn't matter which way you walk.

*Alice.* So long as I get *somewhere*.

*Cat.* Oh, you're sure to do that, if you only walk long enough.

*Alice.* Please, will you tell me what sort of people live 25  
about here?

*Cat.* All mad people.

*Alice.* But I don't want to go among mad people.

*Cat.* Oh, you can't help that; we're all mad here. I'm mad. He's mad. He's dreaming now, and what do 30  
you think he's dreaming about?

## Alice in Wonderland

*Alice (goes to the Frog to scrutinize his face).* Nobody could guess that.

*Cat.* Why, about you! And if he left off dreaming about you, where do you suppose you'd be?

5 *Alice.* Where I am now, of course.

*Cat.* Not you. You'd be nowhere. Why, you're only a sort of thing in his dream; and you're mad too.

*Alice.* How do you know I'm mad?

*Cat.* You must be, or you wouldn't have come here.

10 *Alice.* How do you know that you're mad?

*Cat.* To begin with, a dog's not mad. You grant that?

*Alice.* I suppose so.

*Cat.* Well, then, you see a dog growls when it's angry, and wags its tail when it's pleased. Now I growl when  
15 I'm pleased, and wag my tail when I'm angry. Therefore I'm mad.

*Alice.* I call it purring, not growling.

*Cat.* Call it what you like. Do you play croquet with the Queen to-day?

20 *Alice.* I should like it very much, but I haven't been invited yet.

*Cat.* You'll see me there. (*Vanishes.*)

*Alice (to squirming Baby).* Oh, dear, it's heavy and so ugly. Don't grunt — Oh — it's a — pig. Please, Mr.  
25 Footman, take it!

(*Frog rises with dignity, whistles, and disappears into the house; a kettle comes bounding out. Alice puts pig down and it crawls off.*)

*Cat (appearing again).* By-the-bye, what became of  
30 the baby?

## Alice in Wonderland

*Alice.* It turned into a pig.

*Cat.* I thought it would.

*(Vanishes. FROG comes out of the house with hedgehogs and flamingoes.)*

*Cat (reappearing).* Did you say pig, or fig? 5

*Alice.* I said pig; and I wish you wouldn't keep appearing and vanishing so suddenly; you make one quite giddy.

*Cat.* All right.

*(It vanishes slowly. Frog puts flamingoes down and reënters house. While Alice is examining the flamingoes curiously, TWEEDLEDUM and TWEEDLEDEE, each with an arm round the other's neck, sidestep in and stand looking at Alice.)* 10

*Alice (turns, sees them, starts in surprise, and involuntarily whispers).* Tweedle — dee. 15

*Dum.* Dum!

*Dee.* If you think we're waxworks, you ought to pay.

*Dum.* Contrariwise, if you think we're alive, you ought to speak. 20

*Dee.* The first thing in a visit is to say "How d'ye do?" and shake hands!

*(The brothers give each other a hug, then hold out the two hands that are free, to shake hands with her. Alice does not like shaking hands with either of them first, for fear of hurting the other one's feelings; she takes hold of both hands at once, and they all dance round in a ring, quite naturally to music: "Here we go round the mulberry bush.")* 25

*Alice.* Would you tell me which road leads out of —

## Alice in Wonderland

*Dee.* What shall I repeat to her?

*Dum.* "The Walrus and the Carpenter" is the longest.  
(*Gives his brother an affectionate hug.*)

*Dee.*

5       The sun was shining —

*Alice.* If it's very long, would you please tell me first  
which road —

*Dee.*

      The moon was shining sulkily.

10   *Dum.*

      The sea was wet as wet could be —

*Dee.*

      O Oysters, come and walk with us

      The Walrus did beseech —

15   *Dum (looks at Dee).*

      A pleasant walk, a pleasant talk,

      Along the briny beach —

*Dee (looks at Dum).*

      The eldest Oyster winked his eye

20       And shook his heavy head —

*Dum (looks at Dee).*

      Meaning to say he did not choose

      To leave the oyster bed.

*Dee.*

25       But four young Oysters hurried up

      And yet another four —

*Dum.*

      And thick and fast they came at last,

      And more, and more, and more —

30   *Dee.*

      The Walrus and the Carpenter

      Walked on a mile or so,



## Alice in Wonderland

*Dum.*

And then they rested on a rock  
Conveniently low,

*Dee.*

And all the little Oysters stood 5  
And waited in a row.

*Dum.*

"A loaf of bread," the Walrus said,  
"Is what we chiefly need.

*Dee.*

Now if you're ready, Oysters dear, 10  
We can begin to feed."

*Dum.*

"But not on us!" the Oysters cried,  
Turning a little blue. 15

*Dee.*

"The night is fine," the Walrus said,  
"Do you admire the view?"

*Dum.*

The Carpenter said nothing but 20  
"Cut us another slice.

I wish you were not quite so deaf —  
I've had to ask you twice!"

*Dee.*

"It seems a shame," the Walrus said, 25  
"To play them such a trick,

After we've brought them out so far,  
And made them trot so quick!"

*Dum.*

"O Oysters," said the Carpenter, 30  
"You've had a pleasant run!

# Alice in Wonderland

Dee.

Shall we be trotting home again?"

Dum.

But answer came there none —

5 Dee.

And this was scarcely odd, because

Dum.

They'd eaten every —

Dee (*interrupts in a passion, pointing to a white rattle on*  
10 *the ground*). Do you see *that*?

Alice. It's only a rattle —

Dum (*stamps wildly and tears his hair*). I knew it was!  
It's spoilt, of course. My nice new rattle! (*To Dee*)  
You agree to have a battle? (*He collects saucepans and*  
15 *pots*.)

Dee (*picks up a saucepan*). I suppose so. Let's fight  
till dinner. (*They go out hand in hand*.)

Alice (*hears music*). I wonder what is going to happen  
next.

20 (*She backs down stage respectfully as the KING and*  
QUEEN OF HEARTS *enter, followed by the KNAVE OF HEARTS,*  
*carrying the King's crown on a crimson velvet cushion, and*  
*the WHITE RABBIT and others. When they come opposite to*  
*Alice, they stop and look at her. The DUCHESS comes out of*  
25 *her house*.)

Queen (*to the Knave*). Who is this?

(*Knave bows three times, smiles and giggles*.)

Queen. Idiot! What's your name, child?

Alice. My name is Alice, so please your Majesty.

## Alice in Wonderland

Queen. Off with her head! Off —

Alice. Nonsense!

King. Consider, my dear, she is only a child.

Queen. Can you play croquet?

Alice. Yes.

5

Queen. Come on then. Get to your places. Where are the mallets?

Duchess. Here.

*(The FROG appears with the flamingoes and hedgehogs.)*

Queen. Off with his head!

10

*(No one pays any attention.)*

Knave. What fun!

Alice. What is the fun?

Knave. Why, she; it's all her fancy, that. They never execute anyone.

15

Alice. What does one do?

Queen. Get to your places!

*(She takes a flamingo; uses its neck as a mallet and a hedgehog as a ball. The Frog doubles himself into an arch. The King does the same with the followers, and the Knave 20 offers himself as an arch for Alice. Even though Alice does not notice him, he holds the arch position. The Queen shouts at intervals, "Off with his head, off with her head.")*

Alice. Where are the Chess Queens?

25

Rabbit. Under sentence of execution.

---

LINE 4. **croquet**: a game played with balls, mallets, and arches.

## Alice in Wonderland

*Alice.* What for?

*Rabbit.* Did you say, "What a pity?"

*Alice.* No, I didn't. I don't think it's at all a pity. I said, "What for?"

5 *Rabbit.* They boxed the Queen's ears.

*(Alice gives a little scream of laughter.)*

*Rabbit.* Oh, hush! The Queen will hear you! You see they came rather late and the Queen said — Oh, dear, the Queen hears me — *(He hurries away.)*

10 *Alice (noticing the Knave who still pretends to be an arch).* How *can* you go on thinking so quietly, with your head downwards?

*Knave.* What does it matter where my body happens to be? My mind goes on working just the same. The  
15 fact of it is, the more head downwards I am, the more I keep on inventing new things.

*King.* Did you happen to meet any soldiers, my dear, as you came through the wood?

*Alice.* Yes, I did; several thousand, I should think.

20 *King.* Four thousand, two hundred and seven — that's the exact number. They couldn't send all the horses, you know, because two of them are wanted in the game. And I haven't sent the two messengers, either.

*Alice.* What's the war about?

25 *King.* The red Chess King has the whole army against us, but he can't kill a man who has thirteen hearts. *(The Duchess, Queen, Frog, and followers go out. The Knave and the Five-Spot, Seven-Spot, and Nine-Spot of Hearts stand behind the King.)* Just look along the road and tell  
30 me if you can see either of my messengers.

## Alice in Wonderland

*Alice.* I see nobody on the road.

*King.* I only wish I had such eyes; to be able to see Nobody! And at that distance, too! Why, it's as much as I can do to see real people, by this light.

*Alice.* I see somebody now! But he's coming very slowly — and what curious attitudes he goes into — skipping up and down, and wriggling like an eel.

*King.* Not at all — those are Anglo-Saxon attitudes. He only does them when he's happy. I must have two messengers, you know — to come and go. One to come <sup>10</sup> and one to go.

*Alice.* I beg your pardon?

*King.* It isn't respectable to beg.

*Alice.* I only meant that I didn't understand. Why one to come and one to go? 15

*King.* Don't I tell you? I must have two — to fetch and carry. One to fetch, and one to carry.

(*MARCH HARE enters, pants for breath — waves his hands about and makes fearful faces at the King.*)

*King.* You alarm me! I feel faint — give me a ham <sup>20</sup> sandwich. Another sandwich!

*March Hare.* There's nothing but hay left now.

*King.* Hay, then. There's nothing like eating hay when you're faint.

*Alice.* I should think throwing cold water over you <sup>25</sup> would be better.

*King.* I didn't say there was nothing *better*; I said there was nothing *like* it. (*To the March Hare*) Whom did you pass on the road?

*March Hare.* Nobody.

## Alice in Wonderland

*King.* Quite right; this young lady saw him, too. So, of course, Nobody walks more slowly than you.

*March Hare.* I do my best; I'm sure nobody walks much faster than I do.

5 *King.* He can't do that; or else he'd have been here first. However, now you've got your breath, you may tell us what's happened in the town.

*March Hare.* I'll whisper it. (*Much to Alice's surprise, he shouts into the King's ear.*) They're at it again!

10 *King.* Do you call *that* a whisper? If you do such a thing again, I'll have you buttered. It went through and through my head like an earthquake. Give me details, quick!

(*The King and March Hare go out, followed by Five-,*  
15 *Seven-, and Nine-Spots.*)

*Duchess* (*runs in and tucks her arm affectionately into Alice's*). You can't think how glad I am to see you again, you dear old thing!

*Alice.* Oh!

20 *Duchess.* You're thinking about something, my dear, and that makes you forget to talk. I can't tell you just now what the moral of that is, but I shall remember it in a bit.

*Alice.* Perhaps it hasn't one.

25 *Duchess.* Tut, tut, child! Everything's got a moral, if only you can find it.

(*Squeezes closely, digs her chin into Alice's shoulder, and roughly drags Alice along for a walk.*)

*Alice.* The game's going on rather better now.

## Alice in Wonderland

*Duchess.* 'Tis so, and the moral of that is — “Oh, 'tis love, 'tis love, that makes the world go round!”

*Alice.* Somebody said that it's done by everybody minding his own business.

*Duchess.* Ah, well! It means much the same thing, and the moral of *that* is — “Take care of the sense, and the sounds will take care of themselves.”

*Alice.* How fond you are of finding morals in things.

*Duchess.* I dare say you're wondering why I don't put my arm round your waist. The reason is that I'm <sup>10</sup> doubtful about the temper of your flamingo. Shall I try the experiment?

*Alice.* He might bite.

*Duchess.* Very true; flamingoes and mustard both bite. And the moral of that is — “Birds of a feather <sup>15</sup> flock together.”

*Alice.* Only mustard isn't a bird.

*Duchess.* Right, as usual; what a clear way you have of putting things.

*Alice.* It's a mineral, I *think*.

20

*Duchess.* Of course it is; there's a large mustard mine near here. And the moral of that is — “The more there is of mine, the less there is of yours.”

*Alice.* Oh! I know, it's a vegetable. It doesn't look like one, but it is.

25

*Duchess.* I quite agree with you, and the moral of that is — “Be what you would seem to be”; or, if you'd like it put more simply, “Never imagine yourself not to be otherwise than what it might appear to others that what you were or might have been was not otherwise than what you <sup>30</sup> had been would have appeared to them to be otherwise.”

## Alice in Wonderland

*Alice.* I think I should understand that better if I had it written down, but I can't quite follow it as you say it.

*Duchess.* That's nothing to what I could say if I chose.

5 *Alice.* Pray don't trouble yourself to say it any longer than that.

*Duchess.* Oh, don't talk about trouble; I make you a present of everything I've said as yet.

*Alice.* Uhm!

10 *Duchess.* Thinking again?

*Alice.* I've got a right to think.

*Duchess.* Just about as much right as pigs have to fly, and the moral — (*The arm of the Duchess begins to tremble and her voice dies down. The QUEEN OF HEARTS stands before them with folded arms and frowning like a thunderstorm.*) A fine day, your Majesty.

*Queen.* Now, I give you fair warning, either you or your head must be off, and that in about half no time. Take your choice! (*The Duchess goes meekly into the house.*)  
20 Let's go on with the game. (*She goes off, and shouts at intervals, "Off with his head; off with her head."*)

*Cat.* How are you getting on?

*Alice.* It's no use speaking to you till your ears have come. I don't think they play at all fairly, and they all  
25 quarrel so and they don't seem to have any rules in particular. And you've no idea how confusing it is, with all the things alive; there's the arch I've got to go through next, walking about at the other end of the ground — and I should have croqueted the Queen's hedgehog, just now,  
30 only it ran away when it saw mine coming. (*Music begins.*)



## Alice in Wonderland

*Cat.* How do you like the Queen?

*Alice.* Not at all; she's so extremely — (*The KING, QUEEN, and entire Court enter. The Queen is near to Alice. The music stops, and all look at Alice, questioningly. Alice tries to propitiate the Queen.*) — likely to win, (*Music continues.*) that it's hardly worth while finishing the game.

(*Queen smiles and passes on.*)

*King.* Whom are you talking to?

*Alice.* It's a friend of mine — a Cheshire Cat — allow me to introduce it. 10

*King.* I don't like the look of it at all; however, it may kiss my hand if it likes.

*Cat.* I'd rather not.

*King.* Don't be impertinent and don't look at me like that. 15

*Alice.* A cat may look at a king. I've read that in some book, but I don't remember where.

*King.* Well, it must be removed. My dear! I wish you would have this cat removed.

*Queen.* Off with his head! 20

*Knave.* But you can't cut off a head unless there's a body to cut it off from.

*King.* Anything that has a head can be beheaded.

*Queen.* If something isn't done about it in less than no time, I'll have everybody executed, all round. 25

*Alice.* It belongs to the Duchess; you'd better ask her about it.

*Duchess.* It's a lie!

*Cat.* You'd better ask me. Do it if you can.

---

LINE 5. *propitiate* (prō-pīsh' ī-āt): pacify; conciliate.

## Alice in Wonderland

*(It grins away. The Duchess and Frog escape into the house.)*

*Queen.* Cut it off!

*Everybody.* It's gone! It's gone! Where, where, where

5 —

*Queen.* Cut it off. Cut them all off!

*Everybody.* No, no, ~~no~~!

*Alice.* Save me, save me!

*Knave (shouts to Alice and gives her a tart for safety).*

10 Take a tart!

*Queen (seeing Alice stand out a moment from the others).*

Cut hers off! Cut hers off!

*Others (glad to distract Queen's attention from themselves).*

Cut hers off, cut hers off, cut —

15 *(Alice cries in fear and takes a quick bite at the tart. If there is a trap-door on the stage, Alice disappears down it, leaving the crowd circling around the hole, screaming and amazed. If the stage has no trap-door, a bridge is built across the footlights, with stairs leading down into the orchestra*  
20 *pit. When the crowd is chasing Alice, she jumps over the footlights on to the bridge, and, as the curtain is falling, dividing her from the crowd, she appeals to the audience, "Save me, save me, who will save me?" and runs down the stairs and disappears.)*

CURTAIN

# Alice in Wonderland

## ACT III

SCENE I:—Is a garden of high, very conventional and artificial-looking flowers. On a large mushroom sits the CATERPILLAR, smoking a hookah. ALICE is whirling about, trying to get her equilibrium after her fall. She goes to the mushroom timidly, and, conscious of her size, for her chin reaches the top of the mushroom, she gazes at the Caterpillar wonderingly. He looks at her lazily, and speaks in a languid voice.

Caterpillar. Who are you?

Alice. I—I hardly know, sir, just at present. The Queen frightened me so, and I've had an awfully funny fall down a tunnel or a sort of well. At least I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then.

Caterpillar. What do you mean by that? Explain yourself.

Alice. I can't explain myself, I'm afraid, sir, because I'm not myself, you see. Being so many different sizes in a day is very confusing.

Caterpillar. You! Who are you?

Alice. I think you ought to tell me who you are, first.

Caterpillar. Why? (As Alice turns away) Come back: I've something important to say. (Alice comes back.) Keep your temper.

Alice. Is that all?

Caterpillar. No. (He puffs at the hookah in silence;

---

LINE 3. *hookah* *hook'ah*: a Turkish pipe with long tube and large bowl. 4. *equilibrium*: balance.

## Alice in Wonderland

*finally takes it out of his mouth and unfolds his arms.) So you think you're changed, do you?*

*Alice.* I'm afraid I am, sir; I don't keep the same size.

5 *Caterpillar.* What size do you want to be?

*Alice.* I don't know. At least I've never been so small as a caterpillar.

*Caterpillar (rears angrily).* It is a very good height indeed.

10 *Alice.* But I'm not used to it; I wish you wouldn't all be so easily offended.

*Caterpillar.* You'll get used to it in time.

*Alice.* Are you too big or am I too small? (*She compares her height wonderingly with the tall flowers.*)

15 *Caterpillar (looks at her sleepily, yawns, shakes himself, slides down from the mushroom, and crawls slowly away).* One side will make you grow taller, and the other side will make you grow shorter.

*Alice.* One side of what? The other side of what?

20 *Caterpillar.* Of the mushroom.

(*Alice hesitates, then embraces mushroom and picks bit from each side. Three Gardeners, representing spades, enter, carrying brushes and red paint cans.*)

*Two-Spot.* Look out now, Five. Don't go splashing  
25 paint over me like that.

*Five-Spot.* I couldn't help it. Seven jogged my elbow.

*Seven-Spot.* That's right, Five, always lay the blame on others.

*Five-Spot.* You'd better not talk. I heard the Queen  
30 say only yesterday you deserved to be beheaded.

## Alice in Wonderland

*Two-Spot.* What for?

*Seven-Spot.* That's none of your business, Two.

*Five-Spot.* Yes, it is his business, and I'll tell him. It was for bringing the cook tulip roots instead of onions.

*Seven-Spot.* Well, of all the unjust things — 5

*(Sees Alice; others look around: all bow.)*

*Alice.* Could you please tell me what side to eat?

*(Five and Seven look at Two.)*

*Two-Spot.* I don't know anything about it. *(He paints a white rose red.)* You ought to have been red; we put 10 you in by mistake, and, if the Queen was to find it out, we should all have our heads cut off.

*(A thumping is heard off stage and the music grows louder and louder.)*

*Alice.* What's that? 15

*Five-Spot.* The White Chess Queen.

*Seven-Spot.* Don't let her see what we are doing.

*Two-Spot.* She'll tell on us.

*Seven-Spot.* Run out and stop her from coming here.

*Five-Spot (to Alice as she runs to the right).* No, no, the 20 other way.

*Alice.* But she's off there!

*Two-Spot.* You can only meet her by walking the other way.

*Alice.* Oh! what nonsense. 25

*All the Gardeners.* Go the other way!

*Alice (reënters in dismay and dashes out to the left).* She's running away from me. *(The WHITE QUEEN backs in from*

## Alice in Wonderland

right and Alice backs in from left. They meet. The Gardeners cry, "The Queen," and throw themselves flat upon the ground; their backs are like the backs of the rest of the pack. Music stops. Alice looks at the Queen curiously.)

5 Oh, there you are! Why, I'm just the size I was when I saw you last.

White Queen. Of course you are, and who are these? I can't tell them by their backs. (She turns them over with her foot.) Turn over. Ah! I thought so! Get up! What  
10 have you been doing here?

Two-Spot. May it please your Majesty, we were trying —

White Queen (examines rose). I see! Begone, or I'll send the horses after you, and tell the Queen of Hearts.

15 (Gardeners rush off. The RED QUEEN enters. Alice has gone to the mushroom again to look at its sides, and there to her amazement finds a gold crown and scepter, which she immediately appropriates. Music. The Queens watch Alice superciliously. Alice puts on her crown, proudly  
20 exclaiming, in great elation, "Queen Alice," and walks down stage, bowing right and left to the homage of imaginary subjects. She repeats, as if scarcely daring to believe it true, "Queen Alice." Music stops.)

Red Queen. Ridiculous!

25 Alice. Isn't this the Eighth Square?

Red Queen. You can't be a Queen, you know, till you've passed the proper examination.

White Queen. The sooner we begin it, the better.

Alice. Please, would you tell me —

---

LINE 19. *superciliously* (sū'pēr-sīl'y-ūs-lī): haughtily.

## Alice in Wonderland

*Red Queen.* Speak when you're spoken to.

*Alice.* But if everybody obeyed that rule, and if you only spoke when you were spoken to, and the other person always waited for you to begin, you see nobody would ever say anything, so that —

5

*Red Queen.* Preposterous.

*Alice.* I only said "if."

*Red Queen.* She says she only said "if."

*White Queen* (*moans and wrings her hands*). But she said a great deal more than that. Ah, yes, so much more <sup>10</sup> than that.

*Red Queen.* So you did, you know; always speak the truth — think before you speak — and write it down afterwards.

*Alice.* I'm sure I didn't mean —

15

*Red Queen.* That's just what I complained of. You *should* have meant! What do you suppose is the use of a child without any meaning? Even a joke should have some meaning — and a child's more important than a joke, I hope. You couldn't deny that, even if you tried <sup>20</sup> with both hands.

*Alice.* I don't deny things with my *hands*.

*Red Queen.* Nobody said you did. I said you couldn't if you tried.

*White Queen.* She's in that state of mind, that she <sup>25</sup> wants to deny *something* — only she doesn't know what to deny!

*Red Queen.* A nasty, vicious temper. I invite you to Alice's dinner party this afternoon.

*White Queen.* And I invite you.

30

*Alice.* I didn't know I was to have a party at all;

## Alice in Wonderland

but, if there is to be one, I think I ought to invite the guests.

*Red Queen.* We gave you the opportunity of doing it, but I dare say you've not had many lessons in manners yet.

*Alice.* Manners are not taught in lessons; lessons teach you to do sums, and things of that sort.

*White Queen.* Can you do addition? What's one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one?  
10 one and one?

*Alice.* I don't know. I lost count.

*Red Queen.* She can't do addition; can you do subtraction? Take nine from eight.

*Alice.* Nine from eight I can't, you know, but —

15 *White Queen.* She can't do subtraction. Can you do division? Divide a loaf by a knife — what's the answer to that?

*Alice.* I suppose —

*Red Queen (answers for her).* Bread and butter, of course. Try another subtraction sum. Take a bone  
20 from a dog, what remains?

*Alice.* The bone wouldn't remain, of course, if I took it — and the dog wouldn't remain; it would come to bite me — and I'm sure I shouldn't remain.

25 *Red Queen.* Then you think nothing would remain?

*Alice.* I think that's the answer.

*Red Queen.* Wrong as usual; the dog's temper would remain.

*Alice.* But I don't see how —

30 *Red Queen.* Why, look here; the dog would lose its temper, wouldn't it?



## Alice in Wonderland

Alice. Perhaps it would.

Red Queen. Then, if the dog went away, its temper would remain!

Alice. They might go different ways! What dreadful nonsense we *are* talking. 5

Both Queens. She can't do sums a bit!

Alice. Can *you* do sums?

White Queen. I can do addition, if you give me time — but I can't do *subtraction* under *any* circumstances.

Red Queen. Of course you know your A, B, C? 10

Alice. To be sure I do.

White Queen. So do I; we'll often say it over together, dear. And I'll tell you a secret — I can read words of one letter. Isn't that grand? However, don't be discouraged. You'll come to it in time. 15

Red Queen. Can you answer useful questions? How is bread made?

Alice. I know *that*! You take some flour —

White Queen. Where do you pick the flower? In a garden or in the hedges? 20

Alice. Well, it isn't *picked* at all. It's ground —

White Queen. How many acres of ground? You mustn't leave out so many things.

Red Queen. Fan her head! She'll be feverish after so much thinking. 25

(*They fan her with bunches of leaves which blow her hair wildly.*)

Alice. Please — please —

Red Queen. She's all right again now. Do you know languages? What's the French for fiddle-de-dee? 30

# Alice in Wonderland

*Alice.* Fiddle-de-dee's not English.

*Red Queen.* Who ever said it was?

*Alice.* If you tell me what language fiddle-de-dee is, I'll tell you the French for it!

5 *Red Queen.* Queens never make bargains!

*Alice.* I wish queens never asked questions!

*White Queen.* Don't let us quarrel; what is the cause of lightning?

*Alice.* The cause of lightning is the thunder — no, no!  
10 I meant the other way.

*Red Queen.* It's too late to correct it; when you've once said a thing, that fixes it, and you must take the consequences.

*White Queen.* We had *such* a thunder-storm next  
15 Tuesday, you can't think.

*Red Queen.* She *never* could, you know.

*White Queen.* Part of the roof came off, and ever so much thunder got in — and it went rolling round the room in great lumps — and knocking over the tables and things  
20 — till I was so frightened, I couldn't remember my own name!

*Alice.* I never should *try* to remember my name in the middle of an accident. Where would be the use of it?

*Red Queen.* You must excuse her. She means well,  
25 but she can't help saying foolish things, as a general rule. She never was really well brought up, but it's amazing how good-tempered she is! Pat her on the head, and see how pleased she'll be! A little kindness and putting her hair in papers would do wonders with her.

30 *White Queen* (gives a deep sigh and leans her head on *Alice's* shoulder). I am so sleepy!

## Alice in Wonderland

*Red Queen.* She's tired, poor thing; smooth her hair — lend her your nightcap — and sing her a soothing lullaby.

*Alice.* I haven't got a nightcap with me, and I don't know any soothing lullabies. 5

*Red Queen.* I must do it myself, then.

Hush-a-by lady, in Alice's lap!

Till the feast's ready, we've time for a nap;

When the feast's over, we'll go to the ball —

Red Queen and White Queen and Alice and all! 10

And now you know the words (*She puts her head on Alice's other shoulder*), just sing it through to *me*. I'm getting sleepy too.

(*Both Queens fall fast asleep and snore loudly.*)

*Alice.* What *am* I to do? Take care of two Queens 15  
asleep at once? Do wake up, you heavy things!

(*All lights go out, leaving a mysterious glow on Alice and the Queens.*)

*White Rabbit (blows trumpet off stage).* The trial's beginning! 20

*Alice.* What trial is it?

*White Rabbit.* Who stole the tarts?

*Alice.* I ate a tart.

*White Rabbit.* You've got to be tried.

*Alice.* I don't want to be tried. 25

*White Rabbit.* You've got to be tried.

*Alice.* I won't be tried — I won't — I won't!

## Alice in Wonderland

SCENE II: — *Is a court-room, suggesting playing cards. The JURYMEN are all kinds of creatures. The KING and QUEEN OF HEARTS are seated on the throne. The KNAVE is before them in chains. The WHITE RABBIT has a trumpet*  
5 *in one hand, and a scroll of parchment in the other. In the middle of the court stands a table with a large dish of tarts upon it.*

*White Rabbit (blows three blasts on his trumpet). Silence in the court!*

10 *Alice (watches Jurymen writing busily on their slates). What are they doing? They can't have anything to put down yet, before the trial's begun.*

*Knave. They're putting down their names for fear they should forget them before the end of the trial.*

15 *Alice. Stupid things!*

*White Rabbit. Silence in the court!*

*Jurors (write in chorus). Stupid things!*

*One Juror. How do you spell stupid?*

*Alice. A nice muddle their slates will be in before the*  
20 *trial's over.*

*Queen. There's a pencil squeaking. Cut it down!*

*Jurors (in chorus as they write). Squeaking —*

*King (wears a crown over his wig; puts on his spectacles as he says). Herald, read the accusation!*

25 *White Rabbit (blows three blasts on his trumpet, unrolls parchment scroll, and reads to music).*

The Queen of Hearts, she made some tarts,

All on a summer day;

The Knave of Hearts, he stole those tarts,

30 And took them quite away!

King. Consider your verdict!

White Rabbit. Not yet, not yet; there's a great deal to come before that.

King. Call the first witness.

White Rabbit. First witness!

5

Hatter (*comes in with a teacup in one hand and a piece of bread and butter in the other*). I beg your pardon, your Majesty, for bringing these in, but I hadn't quite finished my tea when I was sent for.

King. You ought to have finished; when did you begin?

Hatter (*looks at the MARCH HARE, who follows him arm in arm with the DORMOUSE*). March fourteenth, I think it was.

March Hare. Fifteenth.

Dormouse. Sixteenth.

15

King. Write that down.

Jury. Fourteen, fifteen, sixteen — forty-five. Reduce that to shillings —

King. Take off your hat.

Hatter. It isn't mine.

20

King. Stolen!

Jury. Stolen!

Hatter. I keep them to sell. I've none of my own. I'm a hatter.

(*Queen of Hearts puts on her spectacles and stares at Hatter, who fidgets uncomfortably.*)

King. Give your evidence and don't be nervous, or I'll have you executed on the spot.

(*The Hatter continues to shift nervously from one foot to the other, looks uneasily at the Queen, trembles so that he*

30

## Alice in Wonderland

*shakes off both of his shoes, and in his confusion bites a large piece out of his teacup instead of the bread and butter.)*

*Hatter.* I'm a poor man, your Majesty, and I hadn't but just begun my tea — not above a week or so — and what with the bread and butter getting so thin — and the twinkling of the tea ——

*King.* The twinkling of *what*?

*Hatter.* It began with the tea.

*King.* Of course twinkling begins with a T. Do you  
10 take me for a dunce? Go on!

*Hatter.* I'm a poor man and most things twinkled after that — only the March Hare said ——

*March Hare.* I didn't!

*Hatter.* You did.

15 *March Hare.* I deny it.

*King.* He denies it; leave out that part.

*Queen.* But what did the Dormouse say?

*Hatter.* That I can't remember.

*King.* You *must* remember or I'll have you executed.

20 *Hatter* (*drops teacup and bread and butter and goes down on one knee*). I'm a poor man, your Majesty.

*King.* If that's all you know about it you may stand down.

*Hatter.* I can't go any lower; I'm on the floor as  
25 it is.

*King.* Then you may sit down.

*Hatter.* I'd rather finish my tea.

*King.* You may go.

(*The Hatter goes out hurriedly, leaving one of his shoes*  
30 *behind.*)

## Alice in Wonderland

*Queen (nonchalantly to an Officer).* And just take his head off outside.

*(But the Hatter is out of sight before the Officer can get to the door.)*

*King.* Call the next witness!

5

*White Rabbit.* Next witness!

*(The DUCHESS enters with a pepper-pot, which she shakes about. Everybody begins to sneeze. March Hare sneezes and rushes out.)*

*King.* Give your evidence!

10

*Duchess.* Sha'n't!

*White Rabbit.* Your Majesty must cross-examine *this* witness.

*King.* Well, if I must, I must. What does your cook say tarts are made of?

15

*Duchess.* Pepper.

*(The Duchess shakes the pot and the court sneezes.)*

*Dormouse.* Treacle!

*(The Duchess shakes the pot at him. He sneezes for the first time.)*

20

*Queen.* Collar the Dormouse! Behead the Dormouse! Turn that Dormouse out of court! Suppress him! Pinch him! Off with his whiskers!

*(The whole court is in confusion, turning the Dormouse out, and, while it is settling down again, the Duchess disappears.)*

*White Rabbit.* The Duchess!

## Alice in Wonderland

*Court.* She's gone — she's gone!

*King.* Never mind! (*In a low tone to the Queen*) Really, my dear, *you* must cross-examine the next witness. It quite makes my forehead ache! Call the next witness!

5 *White Rabbit* (*fumbles with the parchment — then cries in a shrill little voice*). Alice!

*Alice.* Here!

*King.* What do you know about this business?

*Alice.* Nothing, whatever.

10 *King* (*to the Jury*). That's very important.

*White Rabbit.* Unimportant, your Majesty means, of course.

*King.* Unimportant, of course I meant. Important — unimportant — unimportant — important. Consider  
15 your verdict!

(*Some of the Jury write "important" and some write "unimportant."*)

*White Rabbit.* There's more evidence to come yet, please your Majesty; this paper has just been picked up.

20 *Queen.* What's in it?

*White Rabbit* (*fumbles with a huge envelope*). I haven't opened it yet, but it seems to be a letter, written by the prisoner to — to somebody.

*King.* It must have been that, unless it was written to  
25 nobody, which isn't usual, you know.

*Alice.* Who is it directed to?

*White Rabbit.* It isn't directed at all; in fact, there's nothing written on the *outside*. (*Takes out a tiny piece of paper.*) It isn't a letter at all; it's a set of verses.

30 *Queen.* Are they in the prisoner's handwriting?



*'The Jury brightens up.'*

*White Rabbit* looks at the *Knave's* hand. *Knave* hides his hand; the chains rattle. No, they're not, and that's the queerest thing about it.

*'The Jury looks puzzled.'*

5

*King.* He must have imitated somebody else's hand!

*Knave.* Please, your Majesty. I didn't write it and they can't prove I did: there's no name signed at the end.

*King.* If you didn't sign it that only makes the matter worse. You must have meant some mischief, or else you'd have signed your name like an honest man.

*(At this there is a general clapping of hands.)*

*Queen.* That proves his guilt.

*Alice.* It proves nothing of the sort! Why, you don't even know what they're about.

*King.* Read them!

*White Rabbit* puts on his monocle. Where shall I begin, please your Majesty?

*King.* Begin at the beginning and go on till you come to the end, then stop.

*White Rabbit.*

"They told me you had been to her,  
And mentioned me to him;  
She gave me a good character,  
But said I could not swim.

25

"I gave her one, they gave him two,  
You gave us three or more;

## Alice in Wonderland

They all returned from him to you,  
Though they were mine before.

“My notion was that you had been  
(Before she had this fit)  
5 An obstacle that came between  
Him, and ourselves, and it.

“Don’t let him know she liked him best,  
For this must ever be  
A secret, kept from all the rest,  
10 Between yourself and me.”

*King.* That’s the most important piece of evidence  
we’ve heard yet; so now let the jury —

*Alice.* If anyone of them can explain it, I’ll give him  
six-pence. I don’t believe there’s an atom of meaning in  
15 it.

*Jury.* She doesn’t believe there’s an atom of meaning  
in it.

*King.* If there’s no meaning in it, that saves a world  
of trouble, you know, as we needn’t try to find any. And  
20 yet I don’t know. (*Spreads out the verses on his knee and  
studies them.*) I seem to see some meaning after all.  
“Said I could not swim.” You can’t swim, can you?

*Knave* (*shakes his head sadly and points to his suit*). Do  
I look like it?

25 *King.* All right, so far; “We know it to be true,”  
that’s the jury, of course; “I gave her one, they gave him  
two” — why, that must be what he did with the tarts,  
you know —

## Alice in Wonderland

*Alice.* But it goes on, "they all returned from *him* to *you*."

*King* (*triumphantly pointing to the tarts*). Why, there they are! Nothing can be clearer than that. Then again, "before she had this fit" — you never had fits, my dear, <sup>5</sup> I think?

*Queen.* Never!

*King.* Then the words don't *fit* you.

(*There is dead silence, while the King looks around at the court with a smile.*) 10

*King.* It's a pun! (*Everybody laughs. Music.*) Let the jury consider their verdict.

*Queen.* No, no! Sentence first — verdict afterwards.

*Alice.* Stuff and nonsense!

*Queen* (*furiously*). Hold your tongue! 15

*Alice.* I won't!

*Queen.* Off with her head!

*Alice.* Who cares for you?

*Queen.* Cut it off!

*Alice.* You're nothing but a pack of cards! 20

(*As lights go out and curtain falls all the characters hold their positions as if petrified.*)

### CURTAIN

SCENE III: — *The curtain rises to show ALICE still asleep in the armchair, the fire in the grate suffusing her with its glow.* 25

*Carroll.* Wake up, Alice, it is time for tea.

## Alice in Wonderland

(Off stage, the characters repeat their most characteristic lines, "Off with her head," "Consider your verdict," "Oh! my fur and whiskers"; the Duchess sneezes, the Cat cries, as if the characters were fading away into the pack of real  
5 playing cards which shower through the mirror all over Alice. There is music.)

Alice (wakes, rises, and looks about in surprise and wonderment). Why — it was a dream!

CURTAIN

# MANIKIN AND MINIKIN

## A BISQUE-PLAY

BY

ALFRED KREYMBORG

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## MANIKIN AND MINIKIN

### A BISQUE-PLAY

*Seen through an oval frame, one of the walls of a parlor. The wall paper is a conventionalized pattern. Only the shelf of the mantelpiece shows. At each end, seated on pedestals turned slightly away from each other, two aristocratic bisque figures, a boy in delicate cerise and a girl in cornflower blue. 5 Their shadows join in a grotesque silhouette. In the center, an ancient clock whose tick acts as the metronome for the sound of their high voices. Presently the mouths of the figures open and shut, after the mode of ordinary conversation.*

*She.* Manikin!

10

*He.* Minikin?

*She.* That fool of a servant has done it again.

*He.* I should say, she's more than a fool.

*She.* A meddlesome busybody —

*He.* A brittle-fingered noddy!

15

*She.* Which way are you looking? What do you see?

---

LINE 4. *bisque* (bĭsk): bisque-ware, used in making statuettes and dolls. 5. *cerise*: cherry red. 6. *silhouette*: a figure or likeness cast as a shadow, as on a wall. 7. *metronome* (mēt'rō-nōm): an instrument for marking exact time in music. 10. *Manikin*: a little man; a dwarf. 11. *Minikin*: a little darling; a favorite little woman. 15. *noddy*: a simpleton.

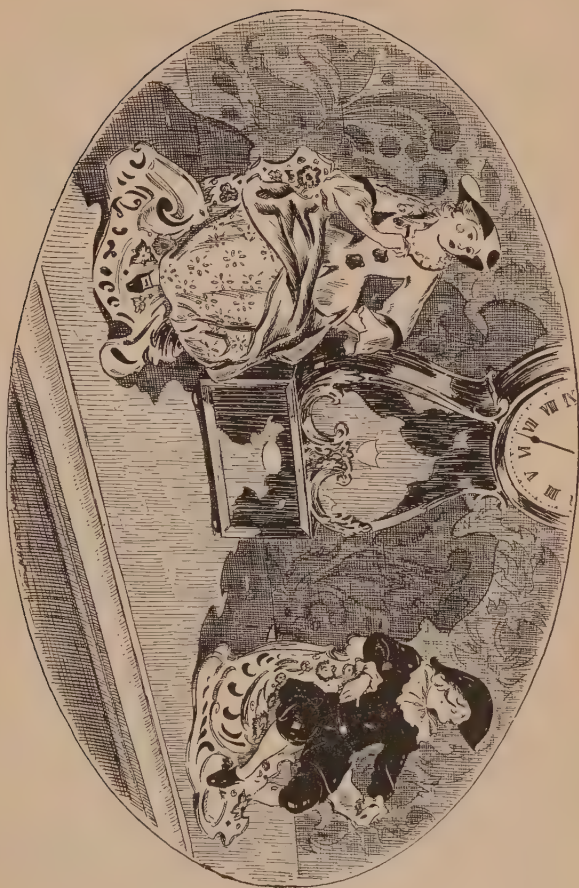
## Manikin and Minikin

- He.* The everlasting armchair,  
the everlasting tiger-skin,  
the everlasting yellow, green, and purple books,  
the everlasting portrait of milord —
- 5 *She.* Oh, these Yankees! And I see  
the everlasting rattan rocker,  
the everlasting samovar,  
the everlasting noisy piano,  
the everlasting portrait of milady —
- 10 *He.* Simpering spectacle!  
*She.* What does she want, always dusting?  
*He.* I should say —  
that is, I'd consider the thought —
- She.* You'd consider a lie —
- 15 oh, Manikin —  
you're trying to defend her!  
*He.* I'm not defending her —  
*She.* You're trying to —  
*He.* I'm not trying to —
- 20 *She.* Then, what are you trying to —  
*He.* Well, I'd venture to say,  
if she'd only stay away some morning —  
*She.* That's what I say in my dreams!  
*He.* She and her broom —
- 25 *She.* Her everlasting broom —  
*He.* She wouldn't be sweeping —  
*She.* Every corner, every cranny, every crevice —  
*He.* And the dust wouldn't move —

---

LINE 4. **milord** (mĩ-lôrd'): a term of address to an English nobleman. 6. **rattan** (ră-tăn'): cane. 7. **samovar** (săm'ô-văr): an urn used for making tea in Russia.





MANIKIN AND MINIKIN



## Manikin and Minikin

- She.* Wouldn't crawl, wouldn't rise, wouldn't fly —  
*He.* And cover us all over —  
*She.* Like a spider-web — ugh!  
*He.* Everlasting dust has been most of our life —  
*She.* Everlasting years and years of dust! 5  
*He.* You on your lovely blue gown —  
*She.* And you on your manly pink cloak.  
*He.* If she didn't sweep, we wouldn't need dusting —  
*She.* Nor need taking down, I should say —  
*He.* With her stupid, clumsy hands — 10  
*She.* Her crooked, monkey paws —  
*He.* And we wouldn't need putting back —  
*She.* I with my back to you —  
*He.* I with my back to you.  
*She.* It's been hours, days, weeks — 15  
by the sound of that everlasting clock —  
and the coming of day and the going of day —  
since I saw you last!  
*He.* What's the use of the sun  
with its butterfly wings of light — 20  
what's the use of a sun made to see by —  
if I can't see you!  
*She.* Manikin!  
*He.* Minikin?  
*She.* Say that again! 25  
*He.* Why should I say it again — don't you know?  
*She.* I know, but sometimes I doubt —  
*He.* Why do you, what do you doubt?  
*She.* Please say it again!  
*He.* What's the use of a sun — 30  
*She.* What's the use of a sun?

## Manikin and Minikin

*He.* That was made to see by —

*She.* That was made to see by?

*He.* If I can't see you!

*She.* Oh, Manikin!

5 *He.* Minikin?

*She.* If you hadn't said that again,  
my doubt would have filled a balloon.

*He.* Your doubt — which doubt, what doubt?

*She.* And although I can't move,  
10 although I can't move unless somebody shoves me,  
one of these days when the sun isn't here,  
I would have slipped over the edge  
of this everlasting shelf —

*He.* Minikin!

15 *She.* And fallen to that everlasting floor  
into so many fragments,  
they'd never paste Minikin together again!

*He.* Minikin, Minikin!

*She.* They'd have to set another here —  
20 some Minikin, I'm assured!

*He.* Why do you chatter so, prattle so?

*She.* Because of my doubt —  
because I'm as positive as I am  
that I sit here with my knees in a knot —  
25 that that human creature — loves you.

*He.* Loves me?

*She.* And you her!

*He.* Minikin!

*She.* When she takes us down she holds you much longer.

30 *He.* Minikin!

*She.* I'm sufficiently feminine —

## Manikin and Minikin

and certainly old enough —

I and my hundred and seventy years —

I can see, I can feel

by her manner of touching me

and her flicking me with her mop —

5

the creature hates me —

she'd like to drop me, that's what she would !

*He.* Minikin !

*She.* Don't you venture defending her !

When I'm in the right position

10

I can note how she fondles you,

pets you like a parrot with her finger-tip,

blows a pinch of dust from your eye

with her softest breath,

holds you off at arm's length

15

and fixes you with her spider look,

actually holds you against her cheek —

her rose-tinted cheek —

before she releases you !

If she didn't turn us apart so often,

20

I wouldn't charge her with insinuation ;

but now I know she loves you —

she's as jealous as I am —

and poor dead me in her live power !

Manikin ?

25

*He.* Minikin ?

*She.* If you could see me —

the way you see her —

*He.* But I see you —

see you always —

30

see only you !

## Manikin and Minikin

*She.* If you could see me  
the way you see her,  
you'd still love me,  
you'd love me the way you do her!  
5 Who made me what I am?  
Who dreamed me in motionless clay?

*He.* Minikin?

*She.* Manikin?

*He.* Will you listen to me?

10 *She.* No!

*He.* Will you listen to me?

*She.* No.

*He.* Will you listen to me?

*She.* Yes.

15 *He.* I love you —

*She.* No!

*He.* I've always loved you —

*She.* No.

*He.* You doubt that?

20 *She.* Yes!

*He.* You doubt that?

*She.* Yes.

*He.* You doubt that?

*She.* No.

25 You've always loved me —

yes —

but you don't love me now —

no —

not since that rose-face encountered your glance —

30 no.

*He.* Minikin!

## Manikin and Minikin

- She.* If I could move about the way she can —  
if I had feet —  
dainty white feet which could twinkle and twirl —  
I'd dance you so prettily  
you'd think me a sun butterfly — 5  
if I could let down my hair  
and prove you it's longer than larch hair —  
if I could raise my black brows  
or shrug my narrow shoulders,  
like a queen or a countess — 10  
if I could turn my head, tilt my head,  
this way and that, like a swan —  
ogle my eyes, like a peacock,  
till you'd marvel,  
they're green, nay, violet, nay, yellow, nay, gold — 15  
if I could move, only move  
just the moment of an inch —  
you would see what I could be!  
You're eye-sick, heart-sick  
of seeing the same foolish porcelain thing, 20  
a hundred years old,  
a hundred and fifty,  
and sixty, and seventy —  
I don't know how old I am !  
*He.* Not an exhalation older than I — 25  
not an inhalation younger !  
Minikin?  
*She.* Manikin?

---

LINE 7. **larch** : a tree distinguished by its long graceful leaves.

13. **ogle** : to eye. 25. **exhalation** : a breathing out. 26. **inhalation** : a breathing in.

## Manikin and Minikin

*He.* Will you listen to me?

*She.* No!

*He.* Will you listen to me?

*She.* No!

5 *He.* Will you listen to me?

*She.* Yes.

*He.* I don't love that creature —

*She.* You do.

*He.* I can't love that creature —

10 *She.* You can.

*He.* Will you listen to me?

*She.* Yes —

if you'll tell me —

if you'll prove me —

15 so my last particle of dust —

the tiniest speck of a molecule —

the merest electron —

*He.* Are you listening?

*She.* Yes!

20 *He.* To begin with —

I dislike, suspect, deplore —

I had best say, feel compassion

for what is called humanity —

or the animate, as opposed to the inanimate —

25 *She.* You say that so wisely —

you're such a philosopher —

say it again!

*He.* That which is able to move

---

LINE 16. *molecule* (möl'ê-kûl): a minute particle. 17. *electron* (ê-lëk'trôn): in physics, the theoretically smallest object. 24. *inanimate* (ÿn-ăn'ÿ-mât): that which is without life.



## Manikin and Minikin

can never be steadfast, you understand?  
Let us consider the creature at hand  
to whom you have referred  
with an undue excess of admiration  
adulterated with an undue excess of envy — 5

*She.* Say that again!

*He.* To begin with —

I can only see part of her at once.  
She moves into my vision;  
she moves out of my vision; 10  
she is doomed to be wayward.

*She.* Yes, but that which you see of her —

*He.* Is ugly, commonplace, unsightly?  
Her face a rose-face?  
It's veined with blood and the skin of it wrinkles — 15  
her eyes are ever so near to a hen's —  
her movements,  
if one would pay such a gait with regard —  
her gait is unspeakably ungainly —  
her hair — 20

*She.* Her hair?

*He.* Luckily I've never seen it down —  
I dare say it comes down in the dark,  
when it looks, most assuredly, like tangled weeds.

*She.* Again, Manikin, that dulcet phrase! 25

*He.* Even were she beautiful,  
she were never so beautiful as thou!

*She.* Now you're a poet, Manikin!

---

LINE 5. **adulterated** : corrupted by being mixed with something inferior. 25. **dulcet** : sweet to the ear.

## Manikin and Minikin

- He.* Even were she so beautiful as thou —  
lending her your eyes,  
and the exquisite head which holds them —  
like a cup two last beads of wine,  
5 like a stone two last drops of rain,  
green, nay, violet, nay, yellow, nay, gold —
- She.* Faster, Manikin!
- He.* I can't, Minikin!  
Words were never given to man  
10 to phrase such a one as you are —  
inanimate symbols  
can never embrace, embody, hold  
the animate dream that you are —  
I must cease.
- 15 *She.* Manikin!
- He.* And even were she so beautiful as thou,  
she couldn't stay beautiful.
- She.* Stay beautiful?
- He.* Humans change with each going moment.  
20 That is a gray-haired platitude.  
Just as I can see that creature  
only when she touches my vision,  
so I could only see her once, were she beautiful —  
at best, twice or thrice —
- 25 you're more precious than when you came!
- She.* And you!
- He.* Human pathos penetrates still deeper  
when one determines their inner life,

---

LINE 12. **embody**: to give a body to; to express.  
20. **platitude**: commonplace or dull thought, often repeated.

## Manikin and Minikin

as we've pondered their outer.

Their inner changes far more desperately.

*She.* How so, wise Manikin?

*He.* They have what philosophy terms moods,  
and moods are more pervious to modulation 5  
than pools to idle breezes.

These people may say, to begin with —

I love you.

This may be true, I'm assured —

as true as when *we* say, I love you. 10

But they can only say,

I love you,

so long as the mood breathes,

so long as the breezes blow,

so long as water remains wet. 15

They are honest —

they mean what they say —

passionately, tenaciously, tragically —

but when the mood languishes,  
they have to say, 20

if it be they are honest —

I do not love you.

Or they have to say,

I love you,  
to somebody else. 25

*She.* To somebody else?

*He.* Now, you and I —  
we've said that to each other —

---

LINE 5. *pervious to modulation*: subject to change. 18. *tenaciously* (tê-nā'shŭs-lĭ): persistently. 19. *languishes*: becomes feeble.

## Manikin and Minikin

we've had to say it  
for a hundred and seventy years —  
and we'll have to say it always.

*She.* Say always again!

5 *He.* The life of an animate —

*She.* Say always again!

*He.* Always!

The life of an animate  
is a procession of deaths  
10 with but a secret sorrowing candle,  
guttering lower and lower,  
on the path to the grave —  
the life of an inanimate  
is as serenely enduring —  
15 as all still things are.

*She.* Still things?

*He.* Recall our childhood in the English museum —  
ere we were moved,  
from place to place,  
20 to this dreadful Yankee salon —  
do you remember  
that little old Greek tanagra  
of the girl with a head like a bud —  
that little old Roman medallion  
25 of the girl with a head like a —

*She.* Manikin, Manikin —  
were they so beautiful as I

---

LINE 11. *guttering* : melting and running down the sides so  
as to form gutters. 20. *salon* (sà'lôn') : drawing room.  
22. *tanagra* (tăn'à-grà) : a small statuette of baked clay.

## Manikin and Minikin

did you love them, too —  
why do you bring them back?

*He.* They were not so beautiful as thou —  
I spoke of them —  
recalled, designated them —  
well, because they were ages old —  
and — and —

5

*She.* And — and?

*He.* And we might live as long as they —  
as they did and do!  
I hinted their existence  
because they're not so beautiful as thou,  
so that by contrast and deduction —

10

*She.* And deduction?

*He.* You know what I'd say —

15

*She.* But say it again!

*He.* I love you.

*She.* Manikin?

*He.* Minikin?

*She.* Then even though that creature has turned us apart, 20  
can you see me?

*He.* I can see you.

*She.* Even though you haven't seen me  
for hours, days, weeks —  
with your dear blue eyes —  
you can see me —  
with your hidden ones?

25

*He.* I can see you.

*She.* Which way are you looking? What do you see?

*He.* I look at you.

30

I see you.

## Manikin and Minikin

- She.* And if that fool of a servant —  
oh, Manikin —  
suppose she should break the future —  
our great, happy centuries ahead —  
5 by dropping me, throwing me down?  
*He.* I should take an immediate step  
off this everlasting shelf —  
*She.* But you cannot move!  
*He.* The good wind would give me a blow!  
10 *She.* Now you're a punster!  
And what would your fragments do?  
*He.* They would do what Manikin did.  
*She.* Say that again!  
*He.* They'd do what Manikin did. . . .  
15 *She.* Manikin?  
*He.* Minikin?  
*She.* Shall I tell you something?  
*He.* Tell me something.  
*She.* Are you listening?  
20 *He.* With my inner ears.  
*She.* I wasn't jealous of that woman —  
*He.* You weren't jealous?  
*She.* I wanted to hear you talk —  
*He.* You wanted to hear me talk?  
25 *She.* You talk so wonderfully!  
*He.* Do I, indeed? What a booby I am!  
*She.* And I wanted to hear you say —  
*He.* You cheat, you idler, you —  
*She.* Woman —

---

LINE 10. **punster** : a joker with words.

## Manikin and Minikin

- He.* Dissembler!  
*She.* Manikin?  
*He.* Minikin?  
*She.* Everlastingly?  
*He.* Everlastingly. 5  
*She.* Say it again!  
*He.* I refuse —  
*She.* You refuse?  
*He.* Well —  
*She.* Well? 10  
*He.* You have ears outside your head —  
I'll say that for you —  
but they'll never hear —  
what your other ears hear!  
*She.* Say it — 15  
down one of the ears —  
outside my head?  
*He.* I refuse.  
*She.* You refuse?  
*He.* Leave me alone. 20  
*She.* Manikin?  
*He.* I can't say it!  
*She.* Manikin!

*(The clock goes on ticking for a moment. Its mellow  
chimes strike the hour.)* 25

CURTAIN

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LINE 1. Dissembler : one who pretends.





JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER  
A BIBLICAL DRAMA IN ONE ACT

BY

ELMA EHRLICH LEVINGER

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## CHARACTERS

JEPHTHAH (jěf'thà)	A man of Gilead <sup>1</sup>
SHEILAH (shēl'a)	His only child
ELAD (ē'lād)	His father
DINAH	Sheilah's old nurse
AMASA (ām'ā-sā)	An elder in Israel
NATHAN	His son
RACHEL	Amasa's daughter
ZEBUL (zě'bŭl)	The singer
JOSIAH	Comrade of Jephthah
MICHAL (mī'kāl) }	Young girls of Mizpeh <sup>2</sup>
TIRZAH (tŭr'zā) }	
Soldiers, People of Mizpeh	

**TIME:** A spring morning in the days of the Judges.

**PLACE:** Before the house of Jephthah, on the road to Mizpeh.

<sup>1</sup> gĭl'ê-ăd: a mountainous region east of the Jordan.

<sup>2</sup> mĭz'pě: a sacred spot in Gilead. The word *Mizpeh*, or *Mizpah*, means "watch tower," a term applied to a place where a watch or garrison was set up. The name is given to many places.

## JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER

SCENE : — *The house of Jephthah is a humble, low-roofed affair with several flat stones forming the stairs; rude stone pillars either side the door. A few rocks forming a natural rostrum. We hear a girl's voice singing, within the house, a weirdly impassioned chant of battle and triumphant pride, 5 strangely blended with religious fervor. Still singing, SHEILAH comes out of the house, the lap of her scarlet robe heaped high with flowers which she twines among the garlands already about the posts. She is a slender, dark girl of about sixteen, now shyly dreaming, now running over with youth and happiness. 10 Tissot has drawn her well in his tanned, vibrant young Jewess with the thoughtful eyes. As she works, she sings half absently the old song of her people, the song of Miriam by the sea, improvising now and then, her voice thrilling with joyful pride.*

15

*Sheilah.* The Lord is my strength and my song  
And He is become my salvation;

Him will I praise from morning until evening;  
The Lord has heard the sound of my lamentation;  
He has given ear unto my cry:

20

Therefore will I exalt Him without ceasing.

---

LINE 4. *rostrum*: a stage or platform. 11. *Tissot* (tē'sô'), James Joseph J. (1836-1902): a French painter of Bible subjects. 14. *improvising*: composing without previous study or preparation. 19. *lamentation*: grief.

## Jephthah's Daughter

Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods?

Who is like thee, glorious in holiness,  
Fearful in praises, doing wonders?

The Lord is my strength and my song

5 And He is become my salvation;

He has set my foot upon the neck of those who hated me,

He has decked me in their robes of blue and purple,

Therefore will I exalt him without ceasing,

Therefore will my praises ascend by day and by night.

10 (*DINAH comes from the house, a wrinkled woman with graying hair, but vigorous and upright. She always addresses the girl with a sort of chiding tenderness.*)

*Dinah.* Shame, idle child, shame! Why did you run away and leave me with the hearth unswept and the  
15 dough still within the kneading-trough? (*Grumbling*)  
A pretty damsel to rule the home — and you are woman grown!

(*Sheilah, laughing saucily over her shoulder, gives a final pat to her garlands, and, taking some bread from the*  
20 *flat straw basket upon the steps, begins to scatter crumbs to the birds.*)

*Dinah (with increasing wrath).* You pay less heed to me than to the chirping of those noisy sparrows. Come in at once and help me with my tasks, lest all Mizpeh  
25 say I let you run as wild as a goat upon the hills. Come in, I say!

*Sheilah (shaking her off laughingly).* Nurse, nurse, leave me in peace and give your scolding tongue a holiday, for is it not high festival in Mizpeh? (*She runs up*

## Jephthah's Daughter

*the steps to rearrange a loose garland.*) Surely, I should twine these doorposts with garlands when my own father is returning from battle to-day and all Mizpeh will strew flowers before his victorious feet.

*Dinah (still grumbling).* Aye, at last the folk of Mizpeh<sup>5</sup> know his worth. Those who spit on our poor house when passing will fling wide the city's gate at his coming and call themselves his friends.

*Sheilah.* The lords of Mizpeh have grown his friends — nay, his bondmen. My father went forth an outcast; <sup>10</sup> he will return a king. (*Swaying as in a triumphant dance, a garland above her head*) He has overcome Ammon! The garments of the princes of Ammon are become a carpet to his feet that he may come as a king unto Mizpeh.

*Dinah (shaking her head gloomily).* Yea, rejoice in the <sup>15</sup> thoughtlessness of your youth. Dance and sing in triumph and never a thought of your mother who will not be with the others at the city's gate to sound timbrels to his glory.

*Sheilah (with a sudden change of mood, gravely tender as she throws herself beside Dinah, now seated on the doorsill).* <sup>20</sup> Poor mother! If she had not died when I was born — if she might only stand among the women and hear him praised in the gates. Perhaps, it might redeem a little the years of misery she spent for his sake.

*Dinah (soothing her).* Nay, my little one, forget the <sup>25</sup> jeers and the injuries. Your mother was woman grown when she wedded, and she knew what grief awaited her as the wife of Jephthah, an outlaw in Israel.

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LINE 12. **Ammon** (ăm'ŏn): a people descended from the son of Lot. The word means "populous," a name applied to the children of Ammon. 18. **timbrels**: small hand drums.

## Jephthah's Daughter

*Sheilah (indignantly).* My father's shame was not of his own making!

*Dinah.* Surely, he suffered for no sin of his own. But the sons of Elad, his father, could never forget that Jephthah was the son of a woman of Moab and they hated him for it. His youth was made bitter as the child of a strange woman; when he grew to manhood and found a maiden brave enough to be his wife, her brethren drove them out of Mizpeh with stones and curses.

10 *Sheilah (with scorn).* And for this bridal blessing, for the long years of hatred for him and his, my father avenges himself — by saving his persecutors from Ammon. Less generous would I have shown myself to those who scorned me.

15 *Dinah (chuckling).* Generous! Nay, daughter of Jephthah, your father showed himself a shrewd maker of bargains. Ere he buckled on his armor, did he not exact heavy payment from Gilead? Did he not demand full recognition as son of the tribe — nay, more, that if he  
20 brought low the children of Ammon, he should rule as a king in Mizpeh?

*Sheilah (rising and gravely bowing before an imaginary monarch).* Greeting to you, O lord and king! Enter the gates of our city and be ruler over Mizpeh. Greeting  
25 to you, O warriors of Israel, who have saved us out of the hand of Ammon!

*Dinah (dryly, as she rearranged several garlands).* And greeting to Nathan, son of Amasa, right hand of Jephthah in battle, flower of the youths of Mizpeh!

30 *Sheilah (half angrily).* Cease, Dinah —

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LINE 20. brought low : conquered.

## Jephthah's Daughter

*Dinah (with shrewd humor).* Why should I hold my peace when every tongue in Mizpeh wags with your secret? Even before the sons of Gilead cried on Jephthah for aid, every old wife in Mizpeh knew that Nathan, son of Amasa, had pleaded with your father for your hand. 5

*Sheilah (protesting).* We are not betrothed.

*Dinah (teasingly).* It were well you wore the bridal veil to-day to hide your blushes — even at his name. Your father himself told me that should young Nathan prove himself worthy in battle — 10

*Sheilah.* He never told me of his love.

*Dinah (with a grimace).* These eyes are growing dim. But they could read his face when he bade you farewell and begged you for a trinket to wear in battle. (*Pulling aside one of the girl's long sleeves*) Where is the golden 15 bracelet your mother wore upon her wedding day?

*Sheilah (looking away).* I —

*Dinah (smiling).* He will bring it back to-day and you will wear it again — and the ring of betrothal also.

*Sheilah.* I would not have him see me so meanly 20 clad, when all the maids of Mizpeh wear their festal robes. (*Her arms about Dinah, she speaks pleadingly.*) Dear Dinah, help me plait my hair and let me don fair robes that I may do grace to those who return triumphant from the wars. 25

*Dinah (who has been resting on the doorsill again, rises, grumbling).* Must I leave my work unfinished to deck you? You are fair enough in these.

*Sheilah.* I would be like a queen before Mizpeh.

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LINE 12. **grimace** (grī-mās'): a distortion of the features to express feeling.

## Jephthah's Daughter

(*Petting Dinah*) You will surely unlock the chest in which years ago you laid away my mother's bridal robe and the jewels she wore upon her bridal day. (*As Dinah hesitates and shakes her head*) My father said that they should all  
5 be mine when I was a grown woman. Surely, he would be pleased to see me wear them upon this day of days.

*Dinah (grumbling, but eager).* Yes, you must have them. They will suit you well, though you are less stately than your mother . . . and not half so fair. (*She looks away*  
10 *wistfully, dreaming.*) But you shall be decked like a princess on her bridal day, for the time has come.

*Sheilah (half afraid).* I am but a simple maid. Perhaps I should not wear my mother's bridal garments.

*Dinah (soothing away her fears).* You are a child no  
15 longer — little one. (*Drawing her up the stairs*) Come in with me . . . not stately like your mother . . . but the robes will suit you well.

(*As they stand in the doorway, RACHEL, MICHAL, and TIRZAH, three young girls, laughing and radiant, their arms*  
20 *filled with flowers, run in.*)

*Rachel.* Sheilah, Sheilah, why have you not joined us at the city's gate? We are waiting for your father —

*Tirzah.* We must make haste —

*Michal (holding out her hand).* Hurry — hurry —

25 *Sheilah (proudly, but without anger).* Once, Rachel, you were not so eager to be my friend and playmate. You even censored Nathan, your brother, for crying out to me, as I passed, to join in your games.

*Rachel.* That was long years ago. To-day —

30 *Tirzah.* To-day you are the proudest woman heart in



## Jephthah's Daughter

all Mizpeh. Come, forgive us our past mockery and join our festal procession to greet your father.

*Michal (taking Sheilah's hand timidly.)* Surely, you forgive us.

*Sheilah (with a happy laugh.)* To-day I must forgive you — and all Mizpeh — for I am so happy. *(She bends down and kisses little Michal's upturned face.)* I am glad you will be my friends — I have been hungry for love and friendship all my days.

*Dinah (cynically.)* Ay, we all pay homage even to the dog — if he protect our sheepfold. *(As the girls, laughing and talking among themselves, are about to drag off Sheilah)* Shameless one — have I not taught you better than to run before the gathered folk with tangled hair and in unseemly garments? 15

*Sheilah (dancing back to her nurse.)* Girls, I will join you at the city's gate. But first — ah, wait until you see me in my queenly robes. *(With a mock salaam)* In paying me homage you will forget even my father's glory. 20

*Tirzah.* You will be late —

*Sheilah.* Nay, I will be with you to lead the festal dance before my father. *(The girls run out, laughing and talking. Sheilah is about to follow Dinah when she stops a moment, her eyes on the distant hills, her face glowing with joy, her voice a little hushed at the beauty of it all.)* Ah, Dinah, it is good to be alive on a spring morning when the birds are building their nests and singing of golden summer days. *(Her voice breaking a little)* I am

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LINE 18. *salaam* (sā-lām'): an Oriental salutation made by holding the right hand over the forehead.

## Jephthah's Daughter

so happy I want to run and dance and laugh — and cry.  
For soon my father will return to me, no longer an out-  
cast, but as a king over all Gilead.

*Dinah (with gentle satire).* And with him Nathan,  
5 king of men.

*Sheilah (simply).* And Nathan, the youth who played  
with me, although the others laughed, and helped me  
search for the first shy flowers many springs ago.

*Dinah (kissing her).* Come, let me deck you in your  
10 mother's bridal robes, for the time has come. (*They go  
into the house together.*)

(*A moment's pause. A group of soldiers, among them  
NATHAN and JOSIAH, enter and pass across the stage toward  
Mizpeh. Last of all come JEPHTHAH and his father, ELAD.  
15 Jephthah is a mighty man, broad of shoulder, bull-throated,  
clad in armor. His eyes are keen as a sword; about his  
mouth the shameful years have left bitter lines not even his  
present pride can erase. Elad is a bent old man with a  
calm, cold face. He walks with a staff and sinks upon the  
20 rocks to rest.*)

*Jephthah (with a mocking gesture).* Welcome to Jeph-  
thah's palace, O father. It has long been the target of  
the stones and curses of my neighbors. (*His face softens  
as he notices the garlands about the doorposts; he touches  
25 one caressingly.*) My little Sheilah's handiwork. The  
one thing in all the world to love me when I wore the  
brand of shame.

*Elad (wincing at the unspoken reproach).* How could  
I acknowledge you before the people?

30 *Jephthah.* Surely, there was little pride in being

## Jephthah's Daughter

father of the foreign woman's son. But to-day (*with a swift gesture*) — ah, to-day, I cast aside my ancient shame and my ancient hatreds. My tribe that once cast me out will receive me with timbrels, with singing and with garlands of victory. (*Lifting one of the garlands from the door*) Nay, more: they will keep their bargain and I shall be more than a son of Gilead; I shall rule the people and dwell as a king in Mizpeh. Have I not done well, O my father?

*Elad.* Yea, too well.

10

*Jephthah* (*about to enter the house, comes back to where Elad sits*). I do not understand.

*Elad.* I fear the good fortune which raises a man from the dunghill to the throne. The Lord, when He gives too generously with one hand, withdraws with the 15 other. He has given you all too bountifully of glory — He will demand payment.

*Jephthah.* Let Him demand payment and I will pay.

*Elad* (*shaking his gray head*). Beware of idle boasting, lest you stumble in your pride. The Lord God is not as 20 a merchant in the marketplace that you can bargain with Him.

*Jephthah.* Nay, let Him demand payment and I will mete out to Him with just weights and a just measure. Did I not demand payment of the men of Gilead? And 25 have they not paid? Shall I be less honest with the Lord?

*Elad* (*rising*). He may demand heavy payment. O my son, I am fearful for you. Perhaps, too fearful; but since my Simeon fell in battle yestermoon, I have no son but you and I tremble lest misfortune cross the doorsill of your 30 house. All my hopes lie in you and Sheilah, the last of

## Jephthah's Daughter

our blood in Israel, seeing that you have no other child and all my other sons are dead.

*Jephthah (throwing off his slight forboding).* See — I have only to stretch forth my hand and I grasp (*catching one of the loose garlands*) victory, glory, praise before the sons of Gilead. True, as you say, I have risen from the dunghill. (*Exultantly*) But who can drag me from my throne?

*Elad (quietly).* God!

10 *Jephthah (proudly).* Let Him call me to account and I will answer Him according to His reckoning.

*Elad.* Vows made in storms are forgotten in calms. What of your vow?

*Jephthah (his face suddenly sharp and troubled).* My 15 vow? Perhaps I did indeed do evil in His sight to vow rashly and seek to bribe the living God? (*Unconsciously, he grips his sword, as the battle lives again before his eyes.*) Near midnight and we had waged battle against Ammon since sunrise. My men exhausted, bleeding, nigh unto 20 death. My sword arm weak and wounded. From the hills pale fires burning where those of Ammon offered up sacrifices to their gods and prayed for victory. Could I have done otherwise, O my father?

*Elad.* Beware false vows which lead to shame and dis- 25 honor. The vow which God has heard must be fulfilled.

*Jephthah (sweeping on).* Leaning upon the arm of Nathan, son of Amasa, I groped my way from the field. I had thought to fall on my sword, for I dared not fall alive into the hand of the Gentiles. Under the stars I 30 cried upon the Lord — and He answered me.

*Elad (sternly).* Yea, you called upon Him even as

## Jephthah's Daughter

the heathen called upon their gods that night, offering strange flesh upon their altars in the hills.

*Jephthah.* I was mad — mad with my pain and weariness — and fear. I, even I, Jephthah, knew fear at that moment. Not for myself, for my sword was ready, and though curs worry a dead lion, he feels not their fangs. But I feared for Sheilah, my little dove, whom my death would leave alone in the forest, prey to every snare of the fowler, daughter of an outcast in Israel.

*Elad (softening a little).* So it was for little Sheilah<sup>10</sup> you wrought this sin before the Lord?

*Jephthah.* He will not account it for sin, as in my madness I knew not what I vowed.

*Elad.* But I was not mad — nor was Nathan, son of Amasa, and we heard without mistaking the words<sup>15</sup> you spoke before the Lord. (*Sternly*) Has your madness left you, that you in the light of day can recall the wild vow you pledged there in the darkness?

*Jephthah (striving to speak calmly).* Surely, I recall the vow I made unto the Lord before He sent strength<sup>20</sup> back into my arms and hope into my soul. (*Repeats with a sort of awed hesitancy.*) I vowed unto the Lord and said, "If Thou wilt indeed deliver the children of Ammon into my hand, whatsoever cometh out of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the children<sup>25</sup> of Ammon, it shall be the Lord's and I will offer it up for a burnt offering."

*Elad.* So did you vow — a rash vow and unholy from the mouth of a son of Israel.

*Jephthah.* Can one come forth from a tomb? My<sup>30</sup> house is as empty as a conquered city. Sheilah and

## Jephthah's Daughter

Dinah, her nurse, have gone to join the women in Mizpeh who will dance before me with timbrels and with rejoicing. (NATHAN, *who has previously passed, now re-enters, flowers twined about his sword and helmet.*) Ah, my good Nathan, 5 have you seen your brethren?

Nathan. Yea, my lord Jephthah, and it is well with them, even my aged father, Amasa. He comes with the other elders of Mizpeh to welcome you who have saved them out of the hand of Ammon. Growing impatient, 10 they will seek you here.

Jephthah (*nodding approval*). They come to do me honor. And my little Sheilah? Did she not shine bravely forth among the maids of Mizpeh?

Nathan (*anxiously*). Nay, my lord. She was not with 15 the others. But my sister Rachel said she remained at home to deck herself.

Jephthah (*in sudden fear*). Is she within? (*Unconsciously he turns to his own door, crying out.*) Sheilah!

Sheilah (*within*). Nay, Dinah, the circlet is fastened. 20 Hasten — my father calls! (SHEILAH *comes bounding from the house, dressed in robes of white and rich purples and blues, a jeweled circlet and silvered veil about her head, timbrels in her hands.*) I am the first to greet you. Welcome home.

25 Nathan (*crying out in terror*). Back! Back!

Jephthah (*trying to push her hands away as she seeks to embrace him*). Return unto the house — return. (*Frantically*) Why did you come forth?

Sheilah (*amazed*). To bid you welcome. (*Again 30 trying to throw her arms about him as he turns away*) Father, look at me.

## Jephthah's Daughter

*Jephthah (hoarsely).* What have I done that God should hate me so?

*Sheilah (in hurt wonderment).* Father! (*She goes shyly to Elad and bends to kiss his hand. He raises her and embraces her, his stern face quivering with emotion.* 5 *She goes back to her father, timidly taking his hand.*) Perhaps you are wroth to see me robed in these? Dinah permitted me to deck myself thus, for she thought that it would please you to see me in my mother's festal garments. (*Shyly, her eyes falling before Nathan's admiring* 10 *glance*) She said that they became me. (*Falling before her father, she spreads out her glittering robes.*) Father, will you not look at me?

*Nathan (raising her and trying to draw her away).* Fret not your father. 15

*Sheilah.* But I have not seen him these many months and now —

*Nathan.* He is spent and worn after his wounds and many battles.

*Sheilah (now all tender concern).* Father — you, per- 20 chance, are faint from your long march beneath the burning sun? (*He nods, unable to speak.*) Then, come, and I will take your helmet and your spear. (*Smilingly she disarms him.*) See, Nathan, again I act as armor-bearer to a captain in Israel. Give me your cloak, O 25 my father. (*Her hands are filled; she pauses a moment to lean her head upon his shoulder.*) I will bring a cooling drink for you and you must rest before we go down into Mizpeh together.

*Jephthah (to Nathan).* Take her away. I cannot 30 bear to look upon her face.



## Jephthah's Daughter

*Nathan (to Sheilah, relieving her of her burden as he leads her into the house).* Come — I will bear these things within for you. And Dinah, your nurse, will help us to prepare a drink to refresh your father.

5 *(The two go into the house, talking together, Sheilah casting a glance at her father, half entreaty, half fear.)*

*Jephthah (after a long silence, avoiding Elad's eyes).* The Lord cannot demand payment now. I knew not what I vowed.

10 *Elad (quietly).* The vow that God has heard must be fulfilled.

*Jephthah (pleading).* You must be silent. My victories have left me as a king; my wealth, my power — what are they worth without her, my only child, seeing  
15 that beside her I have neither sons nor daughters? And I will not play the miser with you — if you forget my vow, as I must do.

*Elad.* I am a man of honor, an elder in Israel: yet you dare stain my ears with bribes!

20 *Jephthah (with a sudden craft).* Bribes? Am I not your son — even before the people — and are not my possessions and my praises yours? Now wealth will I give to keep your age from want and in Mizpeh's gate shall my voice praise your name, bidding all men show you reverence.

25 *Elad (with a quiet scorn).* What are the promises of one forsworn? First pay the debt you owe unto the Lord our God.

*Jephthah (broken, his spirit all gone from him).* Hear me for pity, then, since neither gold nor honor buy your  
30 silence. My child is all to me. Just now she stood



## Jephthah's Daughter

there so like her own mother on her bridal day, I dreamed I saw her mother in her face . . . a stately maiden as beautiful as the sunrise. . . . (*Abruptly*) Is it nothing to you that my only child must die?

*Elad (with a sudden flare of anger)*. It is much to me<sup>5</sup> that the last of our blood must perish for your folly, that our line must end should Sheilah's eyes close in death ere she leaves a child to call her "mother."

*Jephthah*. Then mercy — since your bereaved heart will bleed with mine above her grave. What joy will<sup>10</sup> remain for either of us, if she be gone?

*Elad (himself again)*. Our joys and griefs are ripples on a stream. The vow that God has heard must be fulfilled.

*Jephthah (eagerly)*. Perchance a vow made before the<sup>15</sup> altar of the Lord and in the open day. But no man heard my vow save young Nathan, son of Amasa; and he loves her as his own soul. He will not chide me for my broken vow.

*Elad*. But I heard — and I have not forgotten nor<sup>20</sup> will I forget the vow you made before the Lord.

*Jephthah*. Father!

*Elad (unheeding)*. I know with what rash promise you sought to bribe the Lord God, and if your memory stumble I will seek ever to keep your vow before your<sup>25</sup> eyes. If you dare tempt the anger of the Lord by mocking Him, his righteous anger will not flame for you alone, but will consume all our land by reason of your sin. He inclined his ear to your voice; He gave to you the desire of your heart. Surely, He heard your vow and it must be<sup>30</sup> fulfilled.

## Jephthah's Daughter

*Jephthah.* Though you are merciless to me — be kind to her. She is so young; the flower of her life is opening to the sun and a golden path stretches before her. She must not die.

5 *Elad.* Death is a little thing, but honor great. The vow that God has heard must be fulfilled.

*Jephthah (heavily, without anger).* I think you must be as merciless as God.

(*SHEILAH comes from the house bearing a goblet. She is*  
10 *followed by NATHAN and DINAH. The former looks greatly troubled in spite of his efforts to remain calm.*)

*Dinah (with an obeisance to the two men).* Welcome, O my master. I have cared for the maid during your absence like a tender flower. (*Fondly*) Is she not like a  
15 rose in her festal dress?

*Jephthah (holding Sheilah at arm's length and speaking with a terrible longing).* A rose that whispers summer to my heart!

*Sheilah (looking up at him brightly).* Ah, now you are  
20 my good father again! Come, taste of the drink I have just prepared for you.

*Jephthah (taking cup).* A bitter drink, you give to me, my child.

*Nathan (hurriedly to Jephthah as Dinah draws Sheilah*  
25 *away, fussily rearranging her veil).* See, the people of Mizpeh wait no longer. They will do you honor even before your house.

*Jephthah (seizing his hand).* My vow!

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LINE 12. **obeisance** (ô-bâ'săns): a movement of the body in token of respect.

## Jephthah's Daughter

*Nathan.* It must be as though it had never been spoken. Only raise your head and look boldly upon the people, lest they think you a man afflicted by the hand of God.

*(The people of Mizpeh enter in festal procession, the elders, 5 led by AMASA, at their head. The soldiers are in armor, their helmets and spears festooned with flowers. The women and children carry flowers. ZEBUL, the singer, stands among the maidens, who carry timbrels which they clash as they move.)*

*Amasa (as the great shouting dies away).* No longer 10 would we bide by the city's gate to bid you welcome, O Jephthah. Great wonders have you wrought for us in the battlefield; all that is ours — our hands, our homes, our hearts, are yours, seeing that your hand has delivered us from the children of Ammon. 15

*Jephthah (lifelessly).* Not I, but the Lord brought low our enemy. I conquered only in His name.

*Elad (warningly).* And if a man deny Him —

*Zebul (slight and boyish, clad in white and gold).* Women of Mizpeh, cast flowers before the feet of him who delivered 20 us from Ammon. Maidens, sound your timbrels and cry aloud his name before all the people.

*(The women and children shower Jephthah with flowers as he stands on the doorsteps, his hand upon Nathan's shoulder, his face hard and white. Then, at a signal from 25 Zebul, the maidens whirl into a festal dance, clashing their timbrels as they move. The dance is wild and barbaric in its fierce joy: through it all flashes the figure of Jephthah's daughter, who, at the last, casts her timbrels aside and dances with her father's sword held in triumph above her head.)* 30

## Jephthah's Daughter

*People of Mizpeh (as dance ends and maidens prostrate themselves before Jephthah). Hail — Jephthah — hail!*

*A Woman (bringing two little children to Jephthah). Deliverer of Israel, may not my children kiss your garment's hem, that in years to come they may boast of it, speaking of this day of days?*

*Jephthah (drawing back as though in terror). No — no!*

*An Old Man (richly dressed and followed by his slaves).*

O my lord Jephthah, make glad the heart of your servant  
10 by accepting a few poor trinkets out of his hand. (*He presses upon Jephthah two golden caskets he takes from his slaves.*) Accept these, my lord, and honor the giver in your acceptance. (*From one of the caskets, which Jephthah with a gesture almost of horror has handed to Nathan,*  
15 *he draws forth a glittering diadem.*) I know this is too mean a trifle to encircle the brow of him who saved us from Ammon (*with the mock humility of the Orient*) though it has long been cherished in our house, for 'tis said my ancestor brought it out of Egypt and even Pharaoh might  
20 have worn it without shame. (*With another bow*) And deign to take these poor vials filled with rare oils and strange ointments, unworthy your notice, though they might anoint a king on his crowning day.

*Jephthah (protesting). No — no — not for me such gifts*  
25 *and such homage.*

*Nathan. Be strong, my lord, and of good courage. (Seeking to divert the people who have begun to look upon Jephthah curiously, talking among themselves) Sing, Zebul, sing a festal song for our rejoicing.*

## Jephthah's Daughter

*Voices.* Take your harp, O singer of God, and play upon it.

*(Zebul rises upon the rocks and plays a prelude upon his harp before he begins his song. Whenever he pauses, the people continue, improvising in their joy.)* 5

*Zebul.* I will sing unto the Lord,  
I will sing praise to the Lord, the God of Israel.

*Women.* We will sing of the victories of Israel.

*Warriors.* We will sing of the triumph of Jephthah  
before the Lord. 10

*Women.* Lo, Ammon was upon us ;  
Ammon laid waste our cities,  
And our virgins he carried into captivity.

*Warriors.* We took up the sword against Ammon ;  
But Ammon stood as a rock, 15  
And our hearts were troubled within us.

*Zebul.* Then arose Jephthah like a star in the darkness,  
Even as a star that brings deliverance in the night season ;  
He unsheathed the sword and Ammon trembled before  
him ; 20

He went forth into battle and the horsemen of Ammon fled  
before his coming.

*Warriors.* The princes of Ammon fled, leaving their  
weapons behind them ;

*Women.* The women of Ammon wail upon the moun- 25  
tains for those who return not from battle.

*Zebul.* All this has Jephthah accomplished for the sake  
of Israel :

He raised his hand and he conquered,  
He went forth to battle and his captains divided the spoil. 30

## Jephthah's Daughter

*(Zebul pauses for a moment, his fingers wandering dreamily over the strings. Elad comes close to Jephthah, his face stern and threatening.)*

Elad. I will look no longer upon this mockery. Every honor, every praise uttered to your name will do more to kindle the anger of the God you have denied. Strip yourself of deceit and show yourself to the people for what you are — the breaker of your oath even to God.

Jephthah (*indicating Sheilah as she stands listening to Nathan*). I cannot.

Elad. Speak you — or I will speak.

Amasa (*warningly*). Hush — again the singer speaks for God.

Zebul. I will sing unto the Lord,  
15 I will sing praise unto the Lord, the God of Israel;  
For with oil hath He filled my cup,  
He hath filled my cup even to overflowing;  
Therefore will I praise the Lord,  
Therefore will I magnify His name forever and ever.  
20 Jephthah (*turning to Zebul and crying out passionately*).  
Cease with your music and rejoicing!

*(Zebul comes down from his place on the rocks. The people look at each other in amazed fear.)*

Sheilah (*throwing herself before her father*). Father —  
25 my father — what hidden grief tears at your heart?  
What bitter thing troubles you?

Jephthah (*dully*). Alas, my daughter, you have brought me low. You alone trouble me. For I have sworn and I dare not turn back.

## Jephthah's Daughter

*Nathan* (coming to him quickly). For her sake be silent.

*Elad*. Speak, Jephthah — will you tell the people, or must I?

*Nathan*. Peace — Elad — peace! 5

*Elad*. Nay, he must speak, for who can hide from God? Speak, Jephthah — tell of your bargain with the Lord. Let the people judge betwixt you.

(*Jephthah tries to speak, hesitates, turns away. The people murmur among themselves.*) 10

*Tirzah*. The hand of God has touched him; he would speak and yet is dumb.

*Nathan* (pleadingly). You will not tell them?

*Jephthah*. I must speak; for if my tongue is silent he will accuse me. And I feel God is on his side, not mine. 15  
(*To the people*) You praise me for my hard-won battles, the cities I have taken by my spear. Praise instead the Lord God of Israel who led me on and brought me at last unto victory.

*Amasa*. Surely, we praise Him without measure for 20 saving us through your hand.

*Jephthah*. If there be justice in Mizpeh, hear my words and judge fairly between me and this man, even my father. Learn how I bribed the Lord God to do battle for your sakes and brought victory out of His hand that Israel 25 might not perish from the earth.

*Nathan*. You are mad. I pray you do not speak.

*Jephthah*. Nay, my son. Perhaps it is better that the men of Mizpeh decide this thing and bid me do what seems right in their eyes. Can I fear their decision, seeing 30



## Jephthah's Daughter

that they are fathers with the love of their own children in their hearts? (*He turns again to the wondering people*) Hear, then, how I bribed our God that He might lead us unto peace: I, even I, Jephthah, son of Elad, raised my hands to Him in the darkness and cried unto Him: "If Thou wilt indeed deliver the children of Ammon into my hand, whatsoever cometh out of my house to meet me when I return in peace, it shall be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering."

10 *Sheilah (half understanding)*. My father!

*Jephthah (appealing to Nathan)*. Were these the words I spoke to God?

*Nathan (passionately)*. He did not hear your words — He did not hear.

15 *Jephthah (to the people)*. And as I approached the gates of Mizpeh to-day, my daughter came to meet me. These two know she was the first to come from out my house. (*Dinah holds Sheilah in sudden terror. The people draw back.*) Men of Mizpeh, men of Mizpeh, tell me, must I  
20 keep such a vow made in the madness of battle when I knew not what I vowed?

*Amasa (doubtfully to Elad)*. Throughout Mizpeh and Gilead, men speak of your wisdom in the gates and come to you for judgment. Advise us out of your knowledge, O  
25 Elad, and tell us, must he keep this vow?

*Elad*. The vow that God has heard must be fulfilled. Else will his anger consume all Mizpeh and the people therein, because you forced not Jephthah to fulfill his vow.

*Jephthah*. My friends — you are my friends, now that  
30 I have saved you from Ammon — friends, it was for your sake I vowed, and if I sinned I sinned for your sake, also.



## Jephthah's Daughter

If I fail in payment and his anger be kindled against Mizpeh, will you not bear it willingly, since it is I who saved you out of the hand of Ammon?

*Josiah (leaving his place among the warriors).* I am a soldier — a poor, plain man, not wise in the ways of the Lord as you, O elders in Israel. (*He indicates Amasa and Elad.*) But this I know — Jephthah has fought for the Lord of Battles as no man ever fought for Him before. Surely, with Jephthah's blood shed upon the battlefield the Lord will wash out all remembrance of the vow he made for Mizpeh. 10

*Elad.* Not so — for God remembers and is just.

*Josiah.* Then if He does indeed demand a sacrifice, since it was for Mizpeh Jephthah sinned, let one of Mizpeh atone. Let me be slain upon the altar. I have lived my days and there are none to mourn for me; but this young maid is like a meadow flower. 15

(*Murmurs half of relief, half of anger among the people. Jephthah seizes Josiah's hand.*)

*Elad.* Though a dozen men and maidens be offered upon the altar, yet will his wrath not diminish against Mizpeh. Yet will you harbor in your midst a mocker of God, a breaker of vows. If thus you seek to cheat the God of Truth, from this day no vow is safe in Israel. 20

*Zebul (rousing himself from his reverie).* If God require this child for a sacrifice, He will speak. But, surely, the maid is guiltless and she must not die. 25

*Elad (bitterly).* Yet must all the guiltless in Mizpeh perish, because we did not prevent Jephthah when he sought to break his vow? 30

## Jephthah's Daughter

*Nathan (appealing to Amasa).* My father, you are the first of the elders of Mizpeh. You have the ear of the people even as Elad. Speak to them — urge them that they forbid Jephthah to lay hand upon his  
5 child.

*Amasa (heavily).* My son — my son — and you sought her for your bride! (*He turns to the people waiting for his words, hesitates, goes to Jephthah and takes his hand.*) I would that I might comfort you and yet only bitter words  
10 can fall from my tongue to-day. This youth (*his hand on Nathan's shoulder*) is very dear to me in the pride and splendor of his manhood. Yet had I vowed as you, and had the Lord God so smitten me for my presumption, him would I sacrifice to appease the righteous wrath of the  
15 Most High.

*Nathan (protesting).* My father!

*Amasa.* I know that your child is your life, for we live only in our children. But can a man live without honor? Will the sons of men give heed to the pledges  
20 of one who has broken a vow made without compulsion and without force? No power in Israel can force you to do the thing that you have sworn to do, a thing so fearful that I dare not call it by name. But be warned, O Jephthah, that if you fail to keep your vow, every voice in  
25 Israel will cry out against you as a son of shame, a thing without honor, a breaker of vows.

*Jephthah (cowering).* Cease — cease —

*Nathan (turning on his father).* I looked to you to plead for the maid for the sake of mercy, and you have shown  
30 no mercy. You prate of shame and honor and vows, and by your words would shed innocent blood. Tender-

## Jephthah's Daughter

ness do you feel for the honor of Jephthah, but you would send his daughter under the sacrificial knife.

*Amasa (shocked at his rebellion).* My son — you speak to your father!

*Nathan.* Nay, I speak to an elder in Israel, who bears 5 the name of Justice on his lips, but serves her not in his heart. And in seeking to do that which is pleasing to the Lord God, you men of wisdom and elders before the people have gone groping in the darkness. Cruelty has blinded your eyes and you stumble as you go. Cease then to prate 10 of Justice, but learn to know her ways. For I, too, will call upon Justice to spare the daughter of Jephthah in her innocence. (*Murmurs among the people. Jephthah raises his haggard face, almost daring to hope. Nathan points to Sheilah, who stands near her father.*) This maiden is my 15 betrothed wife. Do not the elders in Israel know that her father has no power over her, that she was not his to dedicate to the Lord when he made his vow? (*The people give a great cry of relief. Jephthah breaks down utterly and gropes to reach Sheilah, but she has already hurried to* 20 *Nathan, who clasps her in his arms and draws her from the rest.*) Beloved, will you take life from my hands at such a price? Will you wed me though I dared to speak of you as mine without a word from you to comfort me during these months of doubt and waiting? 25

*Sheilah (shyly, not daring to look at him).* If you had not loved me, I should have been glad to die, for only in your love are joy and life for me.

*Dinah.* Praise to the God of Israel Who would not suffer the innocent to perish! (*She crosses to Sheilah and* 30 *embraces her tenderly, before leading her to her father.*)

## Jephthah's Daughter

*Jephthah (brokenly, as he blesses her).* My daughter, my little white dove, will you forgive me?

*Sheilah.* You knew not what you vowed. (*She goes a little timidly to Elad, who stands wrathfully apart from the others.*) And have you no betrothal blessing for me, O my grandfather?

*Elad (in a voice of cold anger).* How can I bless that which the Lord has already cursed?

(*Sheilah shrinks back, the people growing vaguely disturbed under the implied menace in his words.*)

*Amasa.* Hard words to welcome a bride in Israel!

*Elad.* Better she had never seen the light than to establish a home the pillars of which are treachery and the foundations deceit.

15 *Jephthah.* O my father, would you shame your own blood before the eyes of all Mizpeh?

*Elad.* You do well, my son, to remind me that she is of my blood. Is she not doubly dear to me, seeing my other sons and their children are all dead, and that through  
20 her and her children I hoped to see my name live on in Israel? But, dearer to me than my own blood are righteousness and fair dealing. Though every man in Mizpeh turn his hand to trickery and applaud falsehood, still will I cry out against you. Though you seem to prosper in  
25 your evil, yet in the end will you think upon my warning, or you will know that it is without profit to cheat God.

*Nathan.* Must I tell an elder in Israel that the husband and not the father of a betrothed maiden is her master? That if she is betrothed, she is already as his wife and no  
30 man can take her from him?

## Jephthah's Daughter

*Elad* (*bitingly*). If she be betrothed!

*Nathan*. Her father consented to my suit a month of days ere he vowed her away.

*Elad*. Is this a betrothal in Israel? Where were the witnesses, where the betrothal ring, the dowry bestowed upon the virgin, and the writing which bound her to you as your wife? (*He turns upon Jephthah savagely.*) I have fought a good fight for your honor and I have failed. Save your child by a trick and deceive the God beneath Whose wings she would dwell in Israel. But may death close my eyes ere they behold the payment He will demand of the tricksters of Mizpeh. (*He turns to go, but Nathan stands in his path.*)

*Nathan*. I have sought to keep silent for I am but a youth and how dare I speak wrathfully to an aged head so honored in Israel? But no man shall say I win my bride by fraud and double dealing. (*He turns desperately to the people, drawing Sheilah before them.*) I will not take her for my wedded wife until every voice in Mizpeh proclaim our nuptial blessing, until every tongue declare that he speaks not for the God whose honor he would defend, but out of the doubtful imagination of his own heart. (*He turns to Zebul.*) Zebul, you are the maker of music, the singer of God, and, being near His heart, you hear His voice. Speak, seer, and tell us, must the maiden die?

*Zebul* (*speaking slowly after a long pause*). Even I, the singer of God, must falter in my speaking, for how shall mortal man know the will of his Maker? But this I know — the smoke on grudging altars will not rise; the wreath unwilling fingers place upon the shrine will wither in an hour. We must give gladly, if we give to Him.

## Jephthah's Daughter

*Sheilah (stepping out quickly).* And I give gladly when I give myself.

*Nathan (seeking to silence her).* You are mad.

*Sheilah.* He is mad who would dissuade me. I have  
5 listened while the elders spoke and now I know that my  
father's vow must be fulfilled and that my feet must follow  
the path his words have made for me. (*She goes to him  
quietly.*) Father, since you have vowed unto the Lord,  
offering up my young life, even for the sake of Mizpeh,  
10 then do to me according to your vow.

*Nathan.* No — Sheilah —

*Amasa (restraining him).* Nay, let the maiden speak.

*Sheilah.* I do not know why this thing has come to  
me. Yesterday my life stretched before my feet like a  
15 meadow cool with streams and bright with flowers. I  
thought that God's hand would lead me along the quiet  
household ways my mother knew and that I would serve  
Him best by rearing strong sons to fight for Israel.

*Nathan.* God would not have it otherwise, although  
20 your father again and yet again vowed away your life.

*Sheilah (with sudden spirit).* Think you I lay this  
thing upon God and believe in my heart that He desires  
such a sacrifice? Nay, for He is the God of love and  
pities all his creatures. Think you if I have care to feed  
25 the shy brown birds and sorrow o'er the flower my foot  
has trampled in passing, that He, the Maker of the world,  
will be less loving to the creatures He has made? Surely,  
He Himself will grieve for my death and pity me, cut off  
in the spring and promise of my years.

30 *Dinah.* Truly, He would take no delight in your death.  
Live and be happy and forget your father's vow.

## Jephthah's Daughter

*Sheilah.* I might forget — but the men of Mizpeh would remember. If I live, then must his new-found honor die.

*Dinah (clinging to her).* What is his honor worth against your life? You are as my child and I would not live to weep above your grave. (*Turning to the people who shrink back*) O men of Mizpeh, loose him from his vow.

*Sheilah.* You see they do not answer. From the day of his birth has my father borne a shame not of his own making. The son of the foreign woman, what has he known but scorn from Gilead? And now that with his own blood he has bought a clean name among you, shall I permit him to lose it for my sake?

*Nathan.* And what of me? Let the elders speak of witnesses and the ring of betrothal! What are these things to us who love each other? Before I asked your father for your hand, did not your eyes tell me your love was mine? Did not the touch of your hand before I followed your father to the wars bind us together even before God? (*He draws a broad gold bracelet from his girdle and slips it upon her wrist.*) This did you give to me on parting, and I shall not rest until it becomes indeed the ring of betrothal and as my wife you cross the threshold of my house.

*Sheilah (smiling sadly).* And what gifts could I bring my husband? Shame and the mockery of the men of Mizpeh because I am Jephthah's daughter and live through his dishonor. Death would be easier than life with such a memory crouching beside our hearth.

*Nathan (brokenly).* O Sheilah — Sheilah —

*Sheilah (with a touch of tenderness already strangely im-*



## Jephthah's Daughter

*personal*). Nay, my Nathan, nay, old playmate — do not grieve that this great thing has come to me — to raise my father high before the people and make of my name a golden memory for all days. We little dreamed  
5 of this when in the springtime we played together knee-deep among the meadow flowers. (*Her hands unconsciously caressing the flowers she picks from those tossed before Jephthah, her eyes turned longingly toward the spring-flushed hills*) I never thought that I should die in  
10 spring.

*Dinah (wailing)*. You must not die!

(*The other women take up her lament with all the passionate grief of the Orient.*)

*Sheilah (giving way at their voices)*. Hearken, ye moun-  
15 tains, to my lamentations, and you, O hills, to the tears of my eyes! Rocks, testify to the weeping of my soul and to the grief that is in me! I have not been granted the joy of marriage nor was the wreath of my betrothal completed. I have not been decked with ornaments by the  
20 hand of the bridegroom. Alas, O mother, it was in vain you gave me birth.

*Dinah (wailing)*. The moths will eat the white garments I wove for your bridal.

*Sheilah*. The bridal wreath my nurse twined for me  
25 will wither. (*She tears from her hair the myrtle entwined in her diadem.*) I shall take no pride in my garments of purple and blue.

*Maidens*. We will lament over your passing — we will grieve because you have been cut off in the flower of your  
30 life.



## Jephthah's Daughter

*Sheilah.* I have danced in the sunshine and sung in the early morning. (*Turning to maidens*) Now must you rend your garments as I go alone into the darkness.

*Jephthah (crying from his broken heart).* My daughter — O my daughter! 5

*Sheilah (her own grief forgotten for his sake).* O my father, look upon my face! (*She raises his head from his arms, forcing him to look at her.*) Look at me, father. See — I am not afraid.

*Jephthah (meeting her eyes at last).* What will you have 10 of me, my daughter, in this heavy hour?

*Sheilah.* Grant me that I may go with my companions up to the mountains to sojourn there while I grieve for my lost youth. Let me abide there two months with these maidens and they will lament with me as for one already 15 dead. Yea, even the trees should weep for me and the birds mourn in their singing, seeing that I who so loved them must depart alone out of the land of the living. And when the two months are over, then will I come down into Mizpeh and you shall do to me according to your 20 vow. (*Jephthah nods, unable to speak. He embraces her silently. She turns to the maidens.*) Come with me and as we go we will gather flowers and sing merry songs — the songs the companions of the bride sing, when all rejoicing they bring her to her husband's house. 25

*Dinah (as the girls gather about Sheilah).* Child — child — have you no word for me?

*Sheilah.* Dear, cross old Dinah — you must never scold me again. Come, you will go with us to the city's gate. (*With her arm about Dinah, she goes to Jephthah, 30 who stands with his face hidden, leaning against the door-*

## Jephthah's Daughter

post. She looks at him longingly, is about to embrace him, shakes her head. Silently approaches Elad and kisses the hem of his cloak. His face working with emotion, he blesses her. With a grave obeisance to Amasa and the other elders, is about to follow the singing maidens off toward Mizpeh, when Nathan catches her hand.)

Nathan. Sheilah — is this your farewell to me?

(For a moment she sways against Dinah, then withdraws her hand and smiles up at him, a grave, detached smile.)

10 Sheilah. In two months I shall return.

(The bridal music rises in happy chorus as she follows the maidens, supporting the weeping Dinah. For a moment there is silence among the people. Suddenly Zebul, with a passionate gesture, breaks the strings of his harp.)

15 Zebul. O harp that sang of triumph, be forever dumb.  
(He points to the bowed figure of Jephthah before his house.)

(Slowly the festal procession wends its way toward Mizpeh, the grief-stricken faces in strange contrast to the bridal chorus of the maidens, who repeat again and again: "She will come  
20 to the bridegroom with rejoicing, with singing and the sound of harps!" Alone, Jephthah tears the garlands of rejoicing from the doorposts of his house.)

CURTAIN

# THE GOLDEN DOOM

BY

LORD DUNSANY

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## PERSONS

THE KING  
CHAMBERLAIN  
CHIEF PROPHET  
GIRL  
BOY  
SPIES  
FIRST PROPHET  
SECOND PROPHET  
FIRST SENTRY  
SECOND SENTRY  
STRANGER  
ATTENDANTS

SCENE : Outside the King's great door in Zericon.

TIME : Some while before the fall of Babylon.

## THE GOLDEN DOOM

*Two Sentries pace to and fro, then halt, one on each side of the great door.*

*First Sentry.* The day is deadly sultry.

*Second Sentry.* I would that I were swimming down the Gyshon, on the cool side, under the fruit trees. 5

*First Sentry.* It is like to thunder or the fall of a dynasty.

*Second Sentry.* It will grow cool by night-fall. Where is the King?

*First Sentry.* He rows in his golden barge with ambassadors or whispers with captains concerning future wars. 10  
The stars spare him!

*Second Sentry.* Why do you say "the stars spare him"?

*First Sentry.* Because if a doom from the stars fall suddenly on a king, it swallows up his people and all things round about him, and his palace falls and the walls of his 15  
city and citadel, and the apes come in from the woods and the large beasts from the desert, so that you would not say that a king had been there at all.

*Second Sentry.* But why should a doom from the stars fall on the King? 20

*First Sentry.* Because he seldom placates them.

---

LINE 1. **Sentries** : soldiers placed on guard to see that only authorized persons pass their post. **9. barge** : a pleasure boat. **16. citadel** : fortress commanding a city. **21. placates** (plā'-kāts) : soothes; pacifies.

# The Golden Doom

*Second Sentry.* Ah! I have heard that said of him.

*First Sentry.* Who are the stars that a man should scorn them? Should they that rule the thunder, the plague, and the earthquake withhold these things save for much prayer? Always ambassadors are with the King, and his commanders come in from distant lands, prefects of cities and makers of the laws, but never the priests of the stars.

*Second Sentry.* Hark! Was that thunder?

*First Sentry.* Believe me, the stars are angry.

10 (*Enter a STRANGER. He wanders toward the King's door, gazing about him.*)

*Sentries (lifting their spears at him).* Go back! Go back!

*Stranger.* Why?

15 *First Sentry.* It is death to touch the King's door.

*Stranger.* I am a stranger from Thessaly.

*First Sentry.* It is death even for a stranger.

*Stranger.* Your door is strangely sacred.

*First Sentry.* It is death to touch it.

20 (*The Stranger wanders off. Enter two Children hand in hand.*)

*Boy (to the Sentry).* I want to see the King to pray for a hoop.

(*The Sentry smiles.*)

25 *Boy (pushes the door; to girl).* I cannot open it. (*To the Sentry*) Will it do as well if I pray to the King's door?

---

LINE 6. prefects : governors. 16. Thessaly : a district in northern Greece.

## The Golden Doom

*Sentry.* Yes, quite as well. (*Turns to talk to the other Sentry.*) Is there anyone in sight?

*Second Sentry* (*shading his eyes*). Nothing but a dog, and he far out on the plain.

*First Sentry.* Then we can talk awhile and eat bash. 5

*Boy.* King's door, I want a little hoop.

(*The Sentries take a little bash between finger and thumb from pouches and put that wholly forgotten drug to their lips.*)

*Girl* (*pointing*). My father is a taller soldier than that.

*Boy.* My father can write. He taught me. 10

*Girl.* Ho! Writing frightens nobody. My father is a soldier.

*Boy.* I have a lump of gold. I found it in the stream that runs down to Gyshon.

*Girl.* I have a poem. I found it in my own head. 15

*Boy.* Is it a long poem?

*Girl.* No. But it would have been only there were no more rhymes for sky.

*Boy.* What is your poem?

*Girl.* I saw a purple bird 20

Go up against the sky

And it went up and up

And round about did fly.

*Boy.* I saw it die.

*Girl.* That doesn't scan. 25

*Boy.* Oh, that doesn't matter.

*Girl.* Do you like my poem?

*Boy.* Birds aren't purple.

*Girl.* My bird was.

---

LINE 25. scan : to divide into measures or poetic feet.

## The Golden Doom

*Boy.* Oh!

*Girl.* Oh, you don't like my poem!

*Boy.* Yes, I do.

*Girl.* No, you don't; you think it horrid.

5 *Boy.* No. I don't.

*Girl.* Yes, you do. Why didn't you say you liked it?  
It is the only poem I ever made.

*Boy.* I do like it. I do like it.

*Girl.* You don't, you don't!

10 *Boy.* Don't be angry. I'll write it on the door for you.

*Girl.* You'll write it?

*Boy.* Yes, I can write it. My father taught me. I'll write it with my lump of gold. It makes a yellow mark on the iron door.

15 *Girl.* Oh, do write it! I would like to see it written like real poetry.

*(The Boy begins to write. The Girl watches.)*

*First Sentry.* You see, we'll be fighting again soon.

*Second Sentry.* Only a little war. We never have more  
20 than a little war with the hill-folk.

*First Sentry.* When a man goes to fight, the curtains of the gods wax thicker than ever before between his eyes and the future; he may go to a great or to a little war.

*Second Sentry.* There can only be a little war with the  
25 hill-folk.

*First Sentry.* Yet sometimes the gods laugh.

*Second Sentry.* At whom?

*First Sentry.* At kings.

*Second Sentry.* Why have you grown uneasy about this  
30 war in the hills?



## The Golden Doom

*First Sentry.* Because the King is powerful beyond any of his fathers, and has more fighting men, more horses, and wealth that could have ransomed his father and his grandfather and dowered their queens and daughters; and every year his miners bring him more from the opal-mines and 5 from the turquoise-quarries. He has grown very mighty.

*Second Sentry.* Then he will the more easily crush the hill-folk in a little war.

*First Sentry.* When kings grow very mighty the stars grow very jealous. 10

*Boy.* I've written your poem.

*Girl.* Oh, have you really?

*Boy.* Yes, I'll read it to you. (*He reads.*)

I saw a purple bird

Go up against the sky 15

And it went up and up

And round about did fly.

I saw it die.

*Girl.* It doesn't scan.

*Boy.* That doesn't matter. 20

(*Enter furtively a SPY, who crosses stage and goes out.*  
*The Sentries cease to talk.*)

*Girl.* That man frightens me.

*Boy.* He is only one of the King's spies.

*Girl.* But I don't like the King's spies. They frighten 25 me.

---

LINE 3. **ransomed** : freed from bondage by the payment of money. 4. **dowered** : provided with a life-portion of one's possessions. 21. **furtively** : stealthily; secretly.

## The Golden Doom

Boy. Come on, then, we'll run away.

Sentry (*noticing the Children again*). Go away, go away! The King is coming; he will eat you.

(*The Boy throws a stone at the Sentry and runs out. Enter another SPY, who crosses the stage. Enter third SPY, who notices the door. He examines it and utters an owl-like whistle. No. 2 comes back. They do not speak. Both whistle. No. 3 comes. All examine the door. Enter the KING and his CHAMBERLAIN. The King wears a purple robe. The Sentries smartly transfer their spears to their left hands and return their right arms to their right sides. They then lower their spears until their points are within an inch of the ground, at the same time raising their right hands above their heads. They stand for some moments thus. Then they lower their right arms to their right sides, at the same time raising their spears. In the next motion they take their spears into their right hands and lower the butts to the floor, where they were before, the spears slanting forward a little. Both Sentries must move together precisely.*)

20 First Spy (*runs forward to the King and kneels, abasing his forehead to the floor*). Something has written on the iron door.

Chamberlain. On the iron door!

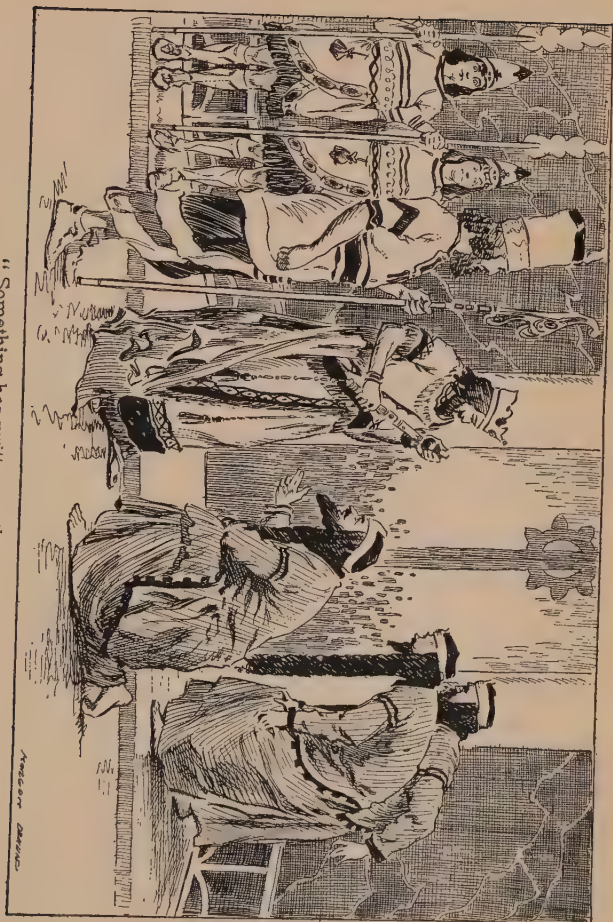
King. Some fool has done it. Who has been here since  
25 yesterday?

First Sentry (*shifts his hand a little higher on his spear, brings the spear to his side and closes his heels all in one motion; he then takes one pace backward with his right foot;*

---

LINE 9. Chamberlain: the chamber attendant of a monarch or lord. 20. abasing: lowering.

"Something has written on the iron door."



THE END



## The Golden Doom

*then he kneels on his right knee; when he has done this he speaks, but not before).* Nobody, Majesty, but a stranger from Thessaly.

*King.* Did he touch the iron door?

*First Sentry.* No, Majesty; he tried to but we drove him away.

*King.* How near did he come?

*First Sentry.* Nearly to our spears, Majesty.

*King.* What was his motive in seeking to touch the iron door? 10

*First Sentry.* I do not know, Majesty.

*King.* Which way did he go?

*First Sentry (pointing left).* That way, Majesty, an hour ago.

*(The King whispers with one of his Spies, who stoops and examines the ground and steals away. The Sentry rises.)* 15

*King (to his two remaining Spies).* What does this writing say?

*A Spy.* We cannot read, Majesty. 20

*King.* A good spy should know everything.

*Second Spy.* We watch, Majesty, and we search out, Majesty. We read shadows, and we read footprints, and whispers in secret places. But we do not read writing.

*King (to the Chamberlain).* See what it is. 25

*Chamberlain (goes up and reads).* It is treason, Majesty.

*King.* Read it.

*Chamberlain.* I saw a purple bird

Go up against the sky,

And it went up and up 30

# The Golden Doom

And round about did fly.

I saw it die.

*First Sentry (aside).* The stars have spoken.

*King (to the Sentry).* Has anyone been here but the  
5 stranger from Thessaly?

*Sentry (kneeling as before).* Nobody, Majesty.

*King.* You saw nothing?

*First Sentry.* Nothing but a dog far out upon the plain  
and the children of the guard at play.

10 *King (to the Second Sentry).* And you?

*Second Sentry (kneeling).* Nothing, Majesty.

*Chamberlain.* That is strange.

*King.* It is some secret warning.

*Chamberlain.* It is treason.

15 *King.* It is from the stars.

*Chamberlain.* No, no, Majesty. Not from the stars,  
not from the stars. Some man has done it. Yet the thing  
should be interpreted. Shall I send for the prophets of the  
stars?

20 *(The King beckons to his Spies. They run up to him.)*

*King.* Find me some prophet of the stars. *(Spies go  
out.)* I fear that we may go no more, my chamberlain,  
along the winding ways of unequaled Zericon, nor play  
dahoori with the golden balls. I have thought more of my  
25 people than of the stars and more of Zericon than of windy  
heaven.

*Chamberlain.* Believe me, Majesty, some idle man has

---

LINE 24. dahoori: a game played with balls, similar to  
tennis.

## The Golden Doom

written it and passed by. Your spies shall find him, and then his name will be soon forgotten.

*King.* Yes, yes. Perhaps you are right, though the sentries saw no one. No doubt some beggar did it.

*Chamberlain.* Yes, Majesty, some beggar has surely done it. But look, here come two prophets of the stars. They shall tell us that this is idle.

*(Enter two PROPHETS and a BOY attending them. All bow deeply to the King. The two SPIES steal in again and stand at back.)*

10

*King.* Some beggar has written a rhyme on the iron gate, and as the ways of rhyme are known to you I desired you, rather as poets than as prophets, to say whether there was any meaning in it.

*Chamberlain.* 'Tis but an idle rhyme.

15

*First Prophet (bows again and goes up to door. He glances at the writing).* Come hither, servant of those that serve the stars.

*(Attendant approaches.)*

*First Prophet.* Bring hither our golden cloaks, for this may be a matter for rejoicing; and bring our green cloaks also, for this may tell of young new beautiful things with which the stars will one day gladden the King; and bring our black cloaks also, for it may be a doom. *(Exit the Boy; the Prophet goes up to the door and reads solemnly.)* The stars have spoken.

*(Reënter Attendant with cloaks.)*

*King.* I tell you that some beggar has written this.

---

LINE 24. doom : final judgment.

## The Golden Doom

*First Prophet.* It is written in pure gold. (*He dons the black cloak over body and head.*)

*King.* What do the stars mean? What warning is it?

5 *First Prophet.* I cannot say.

*King (to Second Prophet).* Come you then and tell us what the warning is.

*Second Prophet (goes up to the door and reads).* The stars have spoken. (*He cloaks himself in black.*)

10 *King.* What is it? What does it mean?

*Second Prophet.* We do not know, but it is from the stars.

*Chamberlain.* It is a harmless thing; there is no harm in it, Majesty. Why should not birds die?

15 *King.* Why have the prophets covered themselves in black?

*Chamberlain.* They are a secret people and look for inner meanings. There is no harm in it.

*King.* They have covered themselves in black.

20 *Chamberlain.* They have not spoken of any evil thing. They have not spoken of it.

*King.* If the people see the prophets covered in black they will say that the stars are against me and believe that my luck has turned.

25 *Chamberlain.* The people must not know.

*King.* Some prophet must interpret to us the doom. Let the chief prophet of the stars be sent for.

*Chamberlain (going toward left exit).* Summon the chief prophet of the stars that look on Zericon.

30 *Voices off.* The chief prophet of the stars! The chief prophet of the stars!



## The Golden Doom

*Chamberlain.* I have summoned the chief prophet, Majesty.

*King.* If he interpret this aright, I will put a necklace of turquoises round his neck with opals from the mines.

*Chamberlain.* He will not fail. He is a very cunning 5 interpreter.

*King.* What if he covers himself with a huge black cloak and does not speak and goes muttering away, slowly with bended head, till our fear spreads to the sentries and they cry aloud? 10

*Chamberlain.* This is no doom from the stars, but some idle scribe hath written it in his insolence upon the iron door, wasting his hoard of gold.

*King.* Not for myself I have a fear of doom, not for myself; but I inherited a rocky land, windy and ill-nurtured, 15 and nursed it to prosperity by years of peace and spread its boundaries by years of war. I have brought up harvests out of barren acres and given good laws unto naughty towns, and my people are happy, and lo, the stars are angry!

*Chamberlain.* It is not the stars, it is not the stars, 20 Majesty, for the prophets of the stars have not interpreted it. Indeed, it was only some reveler wasting his gold.

(*Meanwhile enter CHIEF PROPHET of the stars that look on Zericon.*)

*King.* Chief Prophet of the Stars that look on Zericon, 25 I would have you interpret the rhyme upon yonder door.

*Chief Prophet (goes up to the door and reads).* It is from the stars.

---

LINE 12. scribe : writer. 15. ill-nurtured : poorly cultivated.

# The Golden Doom

*King.* Interpret it and you shall have great turquoises round your neck, with opals from the mines in the frozen mountains.

*Chief Prophet (cloaks himself like the others in a great black cloak).* Who should wear purple in the land but a King, or who go up against the sky but he who has troubled the stars by neglecting their ancient worship? Such a one has gone up and up increasing power and wealth, such a one has soared above the crowns of those that went before him, 10 such a one the stars have doomed, the undying ones, the illustrious. (*A pause*)

*King.* Who wrote it?

*Chief Prophet.* It is pure gold. Some god has written it.

15 *Chamberlain.* Some god?

*Chief Prophet.* Some god whose home is among the undying stars.

*First Sentry (aside to the Second Sentry).* Last night I saw a star go flaming earthward.

20 *King.* Is this a warning or is it a doom?

*Chief Prophet.* The stars have spoken.

*King.* It is, then, a doom?

*Chief Prophet.* They speak not in jest.

*King.* I have been a great King — Let it be said of me, 25 "The stars overthrew him, and they sent a god for his doom." For I have not met my equal among kings that

---

LINE 5. Who should wear purple in the land but a King? The chief Prophet means that only the King could be the purple bird, because only the King wears the royal purple. The King, or the purple bird, flew in the face of the gods by defying their power. The gods grew angry and pronounced the doom.

## The Golden Doom

man should overthrow me; and I have not oppressed my people that man should rise up against me.

*Chief Prophet.* It is better to give worship to the stars than to do good to man. It is better to be humble before the gods than proud in the face of your enemy though he 5 do evil.

*King.* Let the stars hearken yet and I will sacrifice a child to them — I will sacrifice a girl child to the twinkling stars and a male child to the stars that blink not, the stars of the steadfast eyes. (*To his Spies*) Let a boy and girl 10 be brought for sacrifice. (*Exit a Spy to the right looking at footprints.*) Will you accept this sacrifice to the god that the stars have sent? They say that the gods love children.

*Chief Prophet.* I may refuse no sacrifice to the stars nor to the gods whom they send. (*To the other Prophets*) 15 Make ready the sacrificial knives.

(*The Prophets draw knives and sharpen them.*)

*King.* Is it fitting that the sacrifice take place by the iron door where the god from the stars has trod, or must it be in the temple? 20

*Chief Prophet.* Let it be offered by the iron door. (*To the other Prophets*) Fetch hither the altar stone.

(*The owl-like whistle is heard off right. The Third Spy runs crouching toward it. Exit.*)

*King.* Will this sacrifice avail to avert the doom? 25

*Chief Prophet.* Who knows?

*King.* I fear that even yet the doom will fall.

---

LINE 16. **sacrificial** : used in sacrifice. 25. **avail to avert** : be of value in turning aside or preventing.

## The Golden Doom

*Chief Prophet.* It were wise to sacrifice some greater thing.

*King.* What more can a man offer?

*Chief Prophet.* His pride.

5 *King.* What pride?

*Chief Prophet.* Your pride that went up against the sky and troubled the stars.

*King.* How shall I sacrifice my pride to the stars?

*Chief Prophet.* It is upon your pride that the doom will  
10 fall, and will take away your crown and will take away your kingdom.

*King.* I will sacrifice my crown and reign uncrowned amongst you, so only I save my kingdom.

*Chief Prophet.* If you sacrifice your crown which is your  
15 pride, and if the stars accept it, perhaps the god that they sent may avert the doom and you may still reign in your kingdom though humbled and uncrowned.

*King.* Shall I burn my crown with spices and with incense or cast it into the sea?

20 *Chief Prophet.* Let it be laid here by the iron door where the god came who wrote the golden doom. When he comes again by night to shrivel up the city or to pour an enemy in through the iron door, he will see your cast-off pride and perhaps accept it and take it away to the  
25 neglected stars.

*King (to the Chamberlain).* Go after my spies and say that I make no sacrifice. (*Exit the Chamberlain to the right; the King takes off his crown.*) Good-by, my brittle glory; kings have sought you; the stars have envied you.

---

LINE 22. shrivel : wither. 28. brittle : fragile, easily broken.

## The Golden Doom

*(The stage grows darker.)*

*Chief Prophet.* Even now the sun has set who denies the stars, and the day is departed wherein no gods walk abroad. It is near the hour when spirits roam the earth and all things that go unseen, and the faces of the abiding stars <sup>5</sup> will be soon revealed to the fields. Lay your crown there and let us come away.

*King (lays his crown before the iron door; then to the Sentries).* Go! And let no man come near the door all night.

*The Sentries (kneeling).* Yes, Majesty. 10

*(They remain kneeling until after the King has gone. King and the Chief Prophet walk away.)*

*Chief Prophet.* It was your pride. Let it be forgotten. May the stars accept it. *(They go out left.)*

*(The Sentries rise.)* 15

*First Sentry.* The stars have envied him!

*Second Sentry.* It is an ancient crown. He wore it well.

*First Sentry.* May the stars accept it.

*Second Sentry.* If they do not accept it, what doom will overtake him? 20

*First Sentry.* It will suddenly be as though there were never any city of Zericon nor two sentries like you and me standing before the door.

*Second Sentry.* Why! How do you know?

*First Sentry.* That is ever the way of the gods. 25

*Second Sentry.* But it is unjust.

*First Sentry.* How should the gods know that?

---

LINE 5. **abiding** : enduring, awaiting expectantly.

# The Golden Doom

*Second Sentry.* Will it happen to-night?

*First Sentry.* Come! we must march away. (*They go out right.*)

(*The stage grows increasingly darker. Reënter the Chamberlain from the right. He walks across the stage and goes out to the left. Reënter Spies from the right. They cross the stage, which is now nearly dark.*)

*Boy* (*enters from the right, dressed in white, his hands out a little, crying*). King's door, King's door, I want my little  
10 hoop. (*He goes up to the King's door. When he sees the King's crown there, he utters a satisfied "O-oh!" He takes it up, puts it on the ground, and, beating it before him with the scepter, goes out by the way that he entered.*)

(*The great door opens; there is light within; a furtive SPY  
15 slips out and sees that the crown is gone. Another SPY slips out. Their crouching heads come close together.*)

*First Spy* (*hoarse whisper*). The gods have come!

(*They run back through the door and the door is closed. It opens again and the KING and the CHAMBERLAIN come  
20 through.*)

*King.* The stars are satisfied.

CURTAIN

# THE SEVEN GIFTS

BY

STUART WALKER

As Described by Grace Humphrey

Published in the *McCall Magazine*. Reprinted through the courtesy of the Playground and Recreation Association of America, 315 Fourth Avenue, New York City. Application for acting rights must be made to Stuart P. Walker, Carnegie Hall, New York City.

*The Seven Gifts* can be produced by any one who wishes, with two provisions: As soon as you decide to give it, write the author for his permission — this is merely a form but is necessary since the play has been copyrighted — but go right on with your rehearsals while you are waiting for the answer, so that you will not be losing any time. Address Mr. Walker at the Portmanteau Theatre, Carnegie Hall, New York City. The second provision applies only to those who plan to charge admission to the performance of the play. In that case, a fee of five dollars, payable to "Tree of Light," and sent to "Tree of Light," Post Office Station G, New York City, is necessary.





## THE SEVEN GIFTS

PANTOMIME! Does the mere word suggest something particularly out of your reach, an expensive, brilliant spectacle which had to depend for its "show" upon the setting and the brilliancy of its lighting effects, in order to make up to the spectators for the absence of the spoken <sup>5</sup> part? If this is so, then *The Seven Gifts*, by Stuart Walker, will be a revelation to you. This is a pantomime with infinite possibilities. It was first given at the Community Christmas tree in New York City and was tremendously effective. But its big asset lies in the ease <sup>10</sup> with which you can produce it. It can be given indoors or out, on any sort of platform, without a curtain if you haven't one, without footlights, without any elaborate stage setting, and still lose none of its effect.

Pantomime is the fundamental thing in all acting, and <sup>15</sup> in the oldest kind of drama. The Greeks used it widely; the Romans featured it in their circus. In medieval times, pantomimists traveled about giving their shows, popular everywhere, but most polished and most technical in France. To-day the pantomime is more popular than <sup>20</sup> ever because of the motion pictures, since from them people have grown to catch a story readily.

As a Christmas entertainment, a pantomime, instead of the spoken play, has many advantages. Primarily, it is a novelty; it offers color, and it presents a vivid story <sup>25</sup>

## The Seven Gifts

told by living actors. *The Seven Gifts* may well be announced and advertised as a living motion picture — a play which young and old, alike, will enjoy; a play for all races and creeds, which will entertain all and offend none. Furthermore, since there are no lines to be learned, people will be eager to participate.

The fantasy calls for twenty-nine people; three boys, three girls, seven women, and sixteen men. You could omit two of the heralds and one bearer, but they help to make the picture. Some of the performers will require six and some only four rehearsals.

It will be more effective if all the actors are above average height. The Brave Man should be tall and commanding-looking. Select for the Queen a tall woman, regal and dignified in every movement; since she has no words to give this impression, it is the more important that her every gesture tell this to the spectators.

For the stage setting you will need two small Christmas trees, two benches, a throne at the center back on a six-inch platform, a black circle five feet in diameter, made of profile, or of pasteboard, or canvas on a wooden frame. If you prefer, use a hanging back for the Queen's seat, a piece of tapestry or a curtain lovely in color and texture. The throne may be a plain seat with arms, or any decorative chair.

Two sets of placards should be made of stiff cardboard, two by three feet, and placed on easels, at either side of the stage. If possible, it would be well to have an electric light for each, to burn throughout the play.

It would be a good idea to place the entire set of placards on the easels, and remove them one at a time, as the action

## The Seven Gifts

of the fantasy introduces the various characters. This is a device borrowed from the motion pictures, and a good one, as the story is never interrupted. The thirteen placards will need to announce:

<i>The Seven Gifts</i> — A Fantasy of Christmas Giving	5
The Wanderer and the prologue	
The Emerald Queen	
Jack-in-the-Box — An Intermezzo	
The Lowly Man and His Son	
The Rich Man	10
The Haughty Lady	
The Humble Woman	
“You Gave the Bird His Freedom, the Bird Gave Me His Song”	
The Brave Man	15
The Strolling Player	
A placard naming your interlude	
The Dear Child	

The properties that will be needed for this pantomime consist of a great pack for the Wanderer, not heavy, but <sup>20</sup> bulky; a box painted black, with handles of rope at the side, strong enough to hold a boy; a bunch of flowers, a black ball, white wig and beard for the Lowly Man, a scraggly little Christmas tree, undecorated, a bag of gold, a jewel box, large and showy, with bracelet, necklace, <sup>25</sup> rings (from a five-and-ten-cent store), and half a dozen pieces of rich fabrics, very bright in color, one or two of them embroidered or brocaded (why not borrow some

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LINE 8. *Intermezzo* (in'tēr-měd'zō): a short and light piece between the acts of serious drama or opera.

## The Seven Gifts

remnants) a yard and a half to three yards long, an opalescent or silver balloon, eight inches in diameter, filled with air (hydrogen is too dangerous). Half a dozen will be needed to practice with. You will want, also, a great  
5 cake two feet in diameter, made of profile, which is an ordinary black cardboard, painted white, and sprinkled with diamond dust (or have a real cake; this to be cut up for the guests afterwards); two swords with fancy hilts, which may be bought at ten-cent stores; three irises,  
10 or some bright artificial flowers; three embroidered cushions; a bird-cage, a quaint one; a cardinal bird, stuffed — any bright bird will do; a tiger's skin, cut out of quarter-inch orange felt, with black stripes painted on, tusks made of cotton and paper muslin sewn in the head, and stuffed  
15 tail; three little artificial trees in pots; a folding screen, with black and white design; and, finally, a battered doll, which embodies the point of the entire playlet.

The Christmas tree for use out in the auditorium is to have an electric star, wired separately, so that it can burn  
20 throughout the play, the other lights to be turned on at the end. If this is impossible, you could use a big star, covered with gold or silver paper. Have a property committee, to provide all these things; or make each actor responsible for the things he is to use. There is nothing  
25 in this list the average club or committee cannot manage, and there is no difficult stage business except floating the balloon across the court.

To do this, stretch across the top of the stage a heavy thread with a small ring on it, to which is attached the

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LINE 1. opalescent (ō'pāl-ēs'ěnt): having a play of colors, like an opal.

## The Seven Gifts

inflated balloon. Tie to this ring two long threads — long enough to reach to either side of the stage, pass through a little stationary ring, and down to the floor. Two people are needed to work this, and it must be tried several times.

Paying out the right-hand thread, and taking in the left, will make the balloon move across the stage. The overhead thread will give sufficiently to make the balloon move up and down. The balloon bursts when it is touched by some one in the crowd who has on a ring with a sharp stone, the setting turned inside. 10

The music goes on throughout the play, adding to its effectiveness. It should be played on the piano, if possible, but a phonograph may be substituted. If victrolas are used, two should be in readiness as the music must not stop. Five or six rehearsals with the music should be 15 sufficient. The following are most appropriate selections to be played with the different scenes :

Adam's *Noël* for the Wanderer

The trio from Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance*, for the Queen's entrance 20

Gounod's *Funeral March of a Marionette*, for Jack-in-the-Box's dance

*Good King Wenceslaus*, for the Lowly Man

The march from Meyerbeer's *Prophet*, for the Rich Man

The Dessauer march, for the entrance of the Haughty 25 Lady

Chaykovski's *Song Without Words*, at the Humble Woman's entrance

Beethoven's *Turkish March*, for the Brave Man

Pierrot's *Serenade*, for the Strolling Player 30

Any suitable selection for the Interlude; Delibes'

## The Seven Gifts

*Waltzing Doll*, for the Dear Child, changing to the *Adestes Fideles*, when she sees the star.

The directions for the costumes, since so much depends upon them in a production of this kind, should be followed out as closely as possible. They should be of bright colors and beautiful (glossy) textures, but not necessarily of expensive materials. Cotton poplins and sateens (the latter require careful pressing) are good.

The dress of the Prologue should be of brocaded material, scalloped. Any romantic costume will do.

The Wanderer may be merely all tattered and torn.

The Heralds should be in blue, gray, and orange, relieved by black. The design on their robes should be painted on with dyes. Oil paints do not catch the light.

Have the Majordomo's costume like the Heralds' but of white, red, and blue.

The robes of the Queen are emerald and Nile green.

Jack-in-the-Box should be all in black, with a red tarlatan ruff.

The Lowly Man and his Son must be in ragged attire of some sort (use gunnysacking smeared or dyed in places); the red scarf should be of some soft material that will readily pull to pieces. It can be lightly basted together in strips.

The Rich Man's dress, which must be very long, should be of orange and cream color with the coat of light blue. He should wear showy jewelry and gilt necklaces. His cream colored turban should have an orange edging and a big jeweled pin in front.

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LINE 18. tarlatan (tär'lä-tăn): thin, stiff, transparent muslin.

## The Seven Gifts

The Haughty Lady must have a long train and wear a large purple cloak lined with yellow. The decoration in her hair should be three long wires, wrapped, with tiny pompons at the ends.

The Humble Woman could wear any cheap, humble-looking dress; a white apron, a little shawl, and a dark hood that has slipped off her head will serve.

The Brave Man's dress should be of wide stripes and he should wear a high plume on his head.

The Strolling Player should wear an enormous cape which can be made of yellow and black strips sewed together. The hat should have sweeping black feathers.

The Dear Child should wear a white apron with little conventional Christmas trees around the bottom. These may be cut from red and green cloth and tacked on, not pasted.

Electricity is the most satisfactory lighting for this little spectacle, although gas could be used. Three lamps (40 or 60 watts tungsten) may be placed on each side, in the wing just back of the curtain line, and three on each side, in front of the proscenium arch. You may use your lights wherever you find they work out best for your particular setting, since your own ingenuity will probably bring you the most satisfactory results. The first rows of seats on the sides are so seldom satisfactory for guests that they may be used for lights, with screens to shield the spectators from them. Three overhead lamps will be needed at the front of the stage and six at the back, to avoid shadows. These must be placed at such an angle as

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LINE 21. **proscenium** (prô-sē'nĭ-ŭm) : the stage in front of the curtain.



## The Seven Gifts

to cover the entire stage. For each lamp, there should be a cone-shaped reflector, with the inside painted white, or silvered, or aluminized. Your electric light company, if you have one, would very likely be willing to lend you something of the sort for the occasion, either free or at a slight expense; and, at a pinch, one of your own deft-fingered members could fashion them.

For the final tableau, the overhead lights should be turned off and the only light be from the front. As the Dear Child gazes at the star, the lights should be changed from the clear white which has burned steadily throughout the play to red, then to green, blue, and back to white again. This change can be made by passing gelatine mediums — square pieces of gelatine which come in various colors and are fastened in a frame — in front of the lamps still burning; tissue paper may be substituted. One color over another may be needed to get the desired shade; experiment with lighting during the rehearsals.

At the first two rehearsals, the director, seated in the auditorium, should read off the story of the pantomime which follows. As the action is described, the various actors should go through their parts, just roughly. It is best not to stop to try things over and over, but each time go through the play from beginning to end.

Check up what goes well and what badly, and talk things over between rehearsals. Like a motion picture, it must go along smoothly, with no stops, waits, or delays, and this will never look after itself on the day of the performance, unless the director looks out for it at every rehearsal.

There are no words in a pantomime; you can't rely on



## The Seven Gifts

some clever actor's saying the right thing to cover up a mistake. Watch the time at each rehearsal; at first it will go slowly; but gradually you will get it moving faster, till at the last four rehearsals it should take only forty minutes. Plan for fifteen rehearsals, the attendants to 5 come for the last six. Have special rehearsals for Jack-in-the-Box's dance and his game with the Brave Man. The interlude should be practiced by itself, till it goes well in eight or ten minutes; four times are sufficient to try it with the whole play. Little by little, the actors will get 10 their "business" learned, and the director will have less and less to do. Occasionally invite a guest who does not know the story; if he can follow it, your pantomime is going well. If the last four rehearsals do not go of themselves, put in some extra ones. 15

Most valuable and important of all is the real, living story connected with the fantasy. It starts out with the Wanderer, who with his pack comes from among the guests, sees the stage, the drawn curtains, and the waiting spectators. He wonders what all this is for. He starts 20 to investigate, when out steps the Prologue and tells him it is a play, for him and for all the guests. The Prologue claps his hands three times, steps to one side, and shows the first placard, announcing the name of the fantasy. After this, the Prologue and the Wanderer show the plac- 25 ards, both watching the play and joining in the applause.

Enter the Majordomo, announcing the Queen and her attendants — two little princesses, two big and two little heralds, and three bearers. The Queen greets the spectators as her guests and seats herself on the throne. The bearers 30 bring in two great wreaths of evergreen, with red ribbon

## The Seven Gifts

on them, which they hang on either side of the stage. Then they carry in the black box, and out hops Jack-in-the-Box who gives the Queen his gift, a bunch of flowers, and dances, playing with his ball.

- 5 Then come the Lowly Man and his Son, almost blinded by the lights of the court. Awkwardly they present their gift, a poor, scraggly, little tree, which the Queen accepts graciously, though it causes great laughter among the courtiers. Surprised and deeply hurt, the Lowly Man  
10 looks about to see why his gift meets such a reception, discovers the red ribbons on the wreaths, takes the warm red scarf from his neck, tears it into shreds, and with Son's help trims the tree. The Queen motions to the Major-domo to bring her a bag of gold, which she gives to the  
15 Lowly Man. (This episode shows that a poor gift, given freely, is not bettered by imitation.)

The Rich Man enters next, with his two retainers carrying the jewel-box and the cake, which he cuts ceremoniously with his sword. The Queen suggests that the cake be  
20 passed to all those present, but the servant merely shows it to them. The Rich Man gives the Queen a ring from his finger, unlocks the casket, and is presenting jewels and fabrics when a bubble blows by and attracts her attention.

- 25 The servant is ordered to get it, but it is out of reach. The Rich Man stamps his foot, ordering it to come to him; he offers it the cake, jewels, fabrics; and draws his sword to kill the servant, when the Queen interposes, asking if he would take a man's life for a mere bubble? The Rich Man  
30 offers the courtiers a bag of gold if one of them can get it, and in the confusion the bubble breaks and is gone. (This

## The Seven Gifts

episode shows that great wealth cannot make gifts valued, if the right spirit is lacking.)

Then, with two servants, comes the Haughty Lady, bearing three irises. She bows to the Queen very haughtily and is shown a seat next the Lowly Man; but with such folk she will not associate, and she crosses the stage to another place. Every one stares at her till she remembers her gift, puts one iris on a pillow, and sends a servant to give it to the Queen.

The Humble Woman comes with a bird, which sings for <sup>10</sup> the Queen. (If there is not some one who can give a bird song off stage, use a water-whistle or part of *The Mocking-bird* record on the phonograph. Victor Record 18083 has been found very satisfactory.) A bearer brings a cage, but the Humble Woman says that her bird shall <sup>15</sup> never be caged and sets it free, tossing it up and out into the wings. Then, realizing that she has done a terrible thing in freeing the Queen's bird, she falls on her knees; but the Queen, understanding, kisses her on both cheeks, gesturing, "You gave the bird his freedom, the bird gave <sup>20</sup> me his song!" The Haughty Lady, chastened, begs the Queen's permission to give the remaining irises to the Lowly Man and his Son, and sits between them.

Now comes the Brave Man, with his gift of a tiger-skin. He will show the Queen how it was obtained. His at- <sup>25</sup> tendants bring in three little potted trees, to represent the jungle. Who will impersonate the tiger? Up pops Jack-in-the-Box. He is handed the skin, and slips it on.

The Brave Man takes off his sword, lies down in the jungle, and falls asleep. The tiger creeps up, tickles his <sup>30</sup> face and neck, and sits near the sword. The Man, finally

## The Seven Gifts

wakening, wheedles the beast away from the spot, gets his weapon, and lunges at his prey, who keeps always just out of his reach. The contest continues till the Brave Man is utterly tired out, and he sits down dejected, when his hand happens to touch the salt-cellar at his belt. He puts salt on the beast's tail, the curious tiger tastes it and falls down dead. Cautiously, the Brave Man makes sure that the tiger is dead by plunging his sword into him; then he bows to acknowledge the applause of the court, when Jack-in-the-Box hops up, slips under his arm, and takes the praise for his own! (This episode is pure burlesque, and must be made very funny. The music for it is to be played at high speed.)

The Strolling Player enters, greets the Queen, and suggests, as his gift, an interlude. Will the Queen be gracious enough to move her seat? He offers his arm, but Jack-in-the-Box steps in, takes her hand, and escorts her to a seat at the side, he sitting at her feet. The guests and attendants move to left and right, leaving the center of the stage clear.

The Strolling Player claps his hands, the bearers bring in a folding screen, with a black and white design (this makes the best background), and his actors give the interlude. For the interlude something that has already been given, or an incident dramatized, may serve. It should last at the longest ten minutes. A little dance in it is extremely attractive. Or, the entire interlude might be a dance — minuet, or some folk dance — or a dancing-game. It can be given by any number of children or grown-people, depending on the space available. (This episode is introduced for sheer beauty.)

## The Seven Gifts

Last of all comes the Dear Child with her doll. The Child looks wonderingly around the court, not knowing which is the Queen. She picks out the Haughty Lady, who graciously shows her the real Queen. The child kneels down to present her gift, then draws it back to kiss the doll good-by. (This incident must bring out clearly the value of simplicity and sincerity in giving.)

Accepting it, the Queen is so impressed by the fact that this gift is a sacrifice, coming from the heart of the giver, that she motions the Child to choose what she will have of all the gifts. The Dear Child examines them all — the empty cage, the jewels, fabrics, which she tries on and struts about in, the cake, the iris, the ball, the flowers, and Jack's box (he jumps at her and makes her laugh); then she sees the star on the tree, and points to it with a gesture which means she wants that!

The Queen motions to the court to leave. They go quietly, to right and left. The Queen starts toward the Child, to take her in her arms, stops half way, turns, and slips out. Left alone, how can the Child decide? She takes the doll from the throne, shows it all the gifts in turn, but the doll, too, shakes her head, no, no, until she is shown the star; and to this she nods her head yes.

While the Dear Child and the doll, sitting on the throne, are gazing at the gleaming star, the colored lights are played on this final picture, and the lights on the tree are turned on. Slowly the curtain closes.



THE MAN WHO MARRIED A  
DUMB WIFE

A COMEDY IN TWO ACTS

BY

ANATOLE FRANCE

*Of the French Academy*

Translated for Mr. Granville Barker by  
Curtis Hidden Page

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## CHARACTERS

MASTER LÉONARD BOTAL (lā'ō'nār' bō'tál')	Judge
MASTER ADAM FUMÉE (á-dän' fū'mā')	Lawyer
MASTER SIMON COLLINE (sē'môn' kô'lēn')	Doctor
MASTER JEAN MAUGIER (zhän mō'zhā')	Surgeon
MASTER SÉRAFIN DULAURIER (sā'rā'fän' dü'ló'ryā')	Apothecary
GILLES BOISCOURTIER (zhēl bwä'kōōr'tyā')	Secretary
A Blind Fiddler	
CATHERINE (kāt'rēn')	Botal's Wife
ALIZON (á'lē'zôn')	Botal's Servant
MADemoiselle de la GARANDIÈRE (mád'mwä'zēl' dē lá gá'rān'dyār')	
MADAME de la BRUINE (má'dām' dē lá brü'ēn')	
The Chickweed Man	
The Watercress Man	
The Candle Man	
Page to Mademoiselle de la Garandière	
Footman to Madame de la Bruine	
First Doctor's Attendant	
Second Doctor's Attendant	



# THE MAN WHO MARRIED A DUMB WIFE

## ACT I

*A large room in Judge Léonard Botal's house, at Paris.*

*Left: Main entrance, from the rue Dauphine; when the door is open, vista to the Pont-Neuf.*

*Right: Door to the kitchen.*

*At the rear of the stage: A wooden stairway, leading to the 5 upper rooms.*

*On the walls are portraits of magistrates, in gown and wig, and along the walls, great cabinets, or cupboards, full of books, papers, parchments, and bags of legal documents, with more piled on top of the cabinets. There is a double stepladder on 10 castors, with flat steps on each side, used to reach the top of the cabinets.*

*A writing table, small chairs, upholstered arm-chairs, and a spinning-wheel.*

*[In Mr. Granville Barker's production, the street is shown 15 in front of the house, instead of being concealed behind it; so that the chimney-sweep, the chickweed-seller, the candle-man, etc., pass across the front of the stage.]*

*The street door of the house opens on a hall-way, from which a door leads off to the kitchen, and a short stairway leads up, 20*

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LINE 2. *rue* (rü): street. 3. *Pont-Neuf* (pôn-nûf): the oldest bridge in Paris. 17. *chickweed*: a food for birds.

# The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

*in a direction parallel with the front of the stage, past a double lattice window open to the street, to an upper room in which most of the action takes place.*

*This room has a large balcony and window-seat, and stands  
5 entirely open to the street. The writing-table, bookcase  
(instead of cabinets), and stepladder are seen within it.  
There is a bench or form, long enough to seat two or three  
people, in front of the table. A door at the right rear corner of  
the room is supposed to open on a stairway leading to the  
10 rooms above.]*

## SCENE I

*(GILLES is discovered sitting on a small form in front of the table; on the rise of the curtain he turns to the audience, bows in flamboyant style, and then sits down again, with his back to the audience.)*

<sup>15</sup> *The Chickweed Man (goes by, calling). "Chickweed! Chickweed! Good birdseed, good birdseed, good birdseed for saäle!"*

*(Enter ALIZON, with a large basket under each arm. She curtsies to the audience. Gilles, as soon as he spies her, runs  
20 to the street door and stands quiet beside it, so that she does not notice him. As she starts to enter the house, he jumps at her and snatches a bottle from one of the baskets.)*

*Alizon. Don't you know better than to jump at anybody like a bogie-man, right here in a public place?*

<sup>25</sup> *Gilles (pulling a bottle of wine out of the other basket).*

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LINE 13. *flamboyant*: extravagant.

## STREET CRIES

## CHICKWEED



Chick - weed!                      Chick - weed!                      Good



birdseed, good birdseed, good birdseed for sale!

## SWEEPS

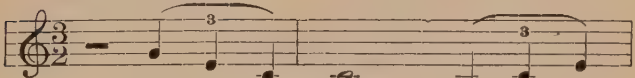


Sweep, sweep your chim - neys, my



la - dies; sweep them clear and clean.

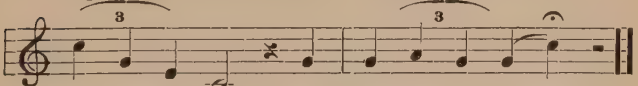
## WATERCRESS



Good wa - ter - cress,      fresh from the



spring! Keeps you health-y and heart-y! Six



far-things a bunch.      Six      far-things a      bunch.

## CANDLES



Can-dles! Cot-ton-wick can-dles! Burn bright as the stars!

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

Don't scream, you little goose. Nobody's going to pluck you. You're not worth it.

(Enter MASTER ADAM FUMÉE. *He bows to the audience.*)

Alizon. Will you let the Judge's wine alone, you rascal!

5 (She sets down her baskets, snatches back one of the bottles, cuffs the secretary, picks up her baskets, and goes off to the kitchen. The kitchen fire-place is seen through the half-open door.)

Master Adam (slightly formal in manner and speech at 10 first). Is this the dwelling of Mr. Léonard Botal, Judge in civil and criminal cases?

Gilles (with bottle behind his back, and bowing). Yes, sir; it's here, sir; and I'm his secretary, Gilles Boiscourtier, at your service, sir.

15 Master Adam. Then, boy, go tell him his old school-fellow, Master Adam Fumée, lawyer, wishes to see him on business.

Gilles. Here he comes now, sir.

(LÉONARD BOTAL comes down the stairs. Gilles goes off 20 into the kitchen.)

Master Adam. Good day, Master Léonard Botal, I am delighted to see you again.

Léonard. Good morning, Master Adam Fumée, how have you been this long time that I haven't set eyes on 25 you?

Master Adam. Well, very well. And I hope I find you the same, your Honor.

Léonard. Fairly so, fairly so. And what good wind wafts you hither, Master Adam Fumée?

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

*(They come forward in the room.)*

*Master Adam.* I've come from Chartres on purpose to put in your own hands a statement on behalf of a young orphan girl. . . .

*Léonard.* Master Adam Fumée, do you remember the days when we were law students together at Orleans University?

*Master Adam.* Yes, yes; we used to play the flute together, and take the ladies out to picnics, and dance from morning to night. . . . But I've come, your Honor, my dear old school-fellow, to hand you a statement on behalf of a young orphan girl whose case is now pending before you.

*Léonard.* Will she give good fees?

*Master Adam.* She is a young orphan girl. . . .

*Léonard.* Yes, yes, I know. But, will she give good fees?

*Master Adam.* She is a young orphan girl, who's been robbed by her guardian, and he left her nothing but her eyes to weep with. But if she wins her suit, she will be rich again, and will give plentiful proof of her gratitude.

*Léonard (taking the statement which Master Adam hands him).* We will look into the matter.

*Master Adam.* I thank you, your Honor, my dear old school-fellow.

*Léonard.* We will look into it, without fear or favor.

*Master Adam.* That goes without saying. . . . But, tell me: Is everything going smoothly with you? You seem worried. And yet, you are well placed here . . . the judgeship's a good one?

---

LINE 2. *Chartres* (shärtr'): a cathedral town in northern France. 12. *pending*: in the process of settlement.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

*Léonard.* I paid enough for it to be a good one — and I didn't get cheated.

*Master Adam.* Perhaps you are lonely. Why don't you get married?

5 *Léonard.* What, what! Don't you know, Master Adam, that I *have* just been married? (*They sit down on the form in front of the table.*) Yes, only last month, to a girl from one of our best country families, young and handsome, Catherine Momichel, the seventh daughter of  
10 the Criminal Court Judge at Salency. But alas! she is dumb. Now you know my affliction.

*Master Adam.* Your wife is dumb?

*Léonard.* Alas, yes.

*Master Adam.* Quite, quite dumb?

15 *Léonard.* As a fish.

*Master Adam.* And you didn't notice it till after you'd married her?

*Léonard.* Oh, I couldn't help noticing it, of course, but it didn't seem to make so much difference to me then as it  
20 does now. I considered her beauty, and her property, and thought of nothing but the advantages of the match and the happiness I should have with her. But now these matters seem less important, and I do wish she could talk; that would be a real intellectual pleasure for me, and,  
25 what's more, a practical advantage for the household. What does a Judge need most in his house? Why, a good-looking wife, to receive the suitors pleasantly, and, by subtle suggestions, gently bring them to the point of making proper presents, so that their cases may receive — more  
30 careful attention. People need to be encouraged to make

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LINE 9. Momichel : mō'mē'shēl'.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

proper presents. A woman, by clever speech and prudent action can get a good ham from one, and a roll of cloth from another; and make still another give poultry or wine. But this poor dumb thing Catherine gets nothing at all. While my fellow-judges have their kitchens and 5 cellars and stables and store-rooms running over with good things, all thanks to their wives, I hardly get wherewithal to keep the pot boiling. You see, Master Adam Fumée, what I lose by having a dumb wife. I'm not worth half as much. . . . And the worst of it is, I'm losing my 10 spirits, and almost my wits, with it all.

*Master Adam.* There's no reason in that, now, your Honor. Just consider the thing closely, and you will find some advantages in your case as it stands, and no mean ones either. 15

*Léonard.* No, no, Master Adam; you don't understand. Think! When I hold my wife in my arms — a woman as beautiful as the finest carved statue, at least so I think and quite as silent, that I'm sure of — it makes me feel queer and uncanny; I even ask myself if I'm hold- 20 ing a graven image or a mechanical toy, or a magic doll made by a sorcerer, not a real human child of our Father in Heaven.

*Master Adam.* What notions!

*Léonard.* Worse yet! What with having a dumb wife, 25 I'm going dumb myself. Sometimes I catch myself using signs, as she does. The other day, on the Bench, I even pronounced judgment in pantomime, and condemned a man to the galleys, just by dumb show and gesticulation. 30

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LINE 29. gesticulation: gesture or motion.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

*Master Adam.* Enough! Say no more! I can see that a dumb wife may be a pretty poor conversationalist! There's not much fun in talking yourself, when you get no response.

5 *Léonard.* Now you know the reason why I'm in low spirits.

*Master Adam.* I won't contradict you; I admit that your reason is full and sufficient. But perhaps there's a remedy. Tell me: Is your wife deaf as well as dumb?

10 *Léonard.* Catherine is no more deaf than you and I are; even less, I might say. She can hear the very grass growing.

*Master Adam.* Then the case is not hopeless. When the doctors and surgeons and apothecaries succeed in  
15 making the deaf-and-dumb speak, their utterance is as poor as their ears; for they can't hear what they say themselves, any more than what's said to them. But it's quite different with the dumb who can hear. 'Tis but child's play for a doctor to untie their tongues. The  
20 operation is so simple that it's done every day to puppies that can't learn to bark. Must a countryman like me come to town to tell you that there's a famous doctor, just around the corner from your own house, in Buci Square, at the Sign of the Dragon, Master Simon Colline, who has  
25 made a reputation for loosing the tongues of the ladies of Paris? In a turn of the hand, he'll draw from your wife's lips a full flood of mellifluous speech, just as you'd turn on a spigot and let the water run forth like a sweet-purling brook.

---

LINE 27. mellifluous (mĕ-līf'loo-ŭs): smooth, honeyed.  
28. spigot: faucet.



## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

*Léonard.* Is this true, Master Adam? Aren't you deceiving me? Aren't you speaking as a lawyer in court?

*Master Adam.* I'm speaking as a friend, and telling you the plain truth. 5

*Léonard.* Then I'll send for this famous doctor — and that right away.

*Master Adam.* As you please. . . . But before you call him in, you must reflect soberly, and consider what it's really best to do. For, take it all in all, though there 10 are some disadvantages in having a dumb wife, there are some advantages, too. . . . Well, good day, your Honor, my dear old school-fellow. (*They go together to the street door.*) Remember, I'm truly your friend — and read over my statement, I beg you. If you give your just 15 judgment in favor of the orphan girl robbed by her grasping guardian, you will have no cause to regret it.

*Léonard.* Be back this afternoon, Master Adam Fumée; I will have my decision ready.

(*They bow low to each other. Exit Master Adam.*) 20

### SCENE II

*Léonard (at the door, calling).* Gilles! Gilles! . . . The rogue never hears me; he is in the kitchen, as usual, upsetting the soup and the servant. He's a knave and a scoundrel. Gilles! . . . Gilles! . . . Here, you rapscallion! You reprobate! . . . 25

*Gilles (entering).* Present, your Honor.

*Léonard (taking him by the ear).* Sirrah! Go straight to the famous doctor, Master Simon Colline, who lives in

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

Buci Square, at the Sign of the Dragon, and tell him to come to my house at once, to treat a dumb woman. . . .

Gilles. Yes, your Honor.

*(Gilles starts off, running, to the right.)*

5 Léonard. Go the nearest way, not round by the New Bridge, to watch the jugglers. I know you, you slow-poke; there's not such another cheat and loafer in ten counties.

*(Gilles comes back, slowly, across stage, and stops.)*

Gilles. Sir, you wrong me. . . .

10 Léonard. Be off! and bring the famous doctor back with you.

Gilles *(bolting off to the left)*. Yes, your Honor.

Léonard *(going up and sitting down at the table, which is loaded with brief-bags)*. I have fourteen verdicts to render  
15 to-day, besides the decree in the case of Master Adam Fumée's ward. And that is no small labor, because a decree, to do credit to the Judge, must be cleverly worded, subtle, elegant, and adorned with all the ornaments both of style and of thought. The ideas must be pleasingly  
20 conceived and playfully expressed. Where should one show one's wit, if not in a verdict?

*(The Watercress Man enters from the right and crosses to the left singing: "Good watercress, fresh from the spring! Keeps you healthy and hearty! Six farthings a bunch. Six farthings a bunch." When the Watercress Man is well on, enter the Candle Man from left to right, singing: "Candles! Cotton-wick candles! Burn bright as the stars!" While he is passing, CATHERINE enters from the upper stairway door; she curtsies to the audience and then sits on the*

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

*window-seat, embroidering. As the street-cries die away Léonard looks up from his work at the table, and, seeing Catherine, goes to her and kisses her as she rises to meet him. She makes a curtsy, kisses him in return, and listens with pleased attention.)*

5

Léonard. Good morning, my love. . . . I didn't even hear you come down. You are like the fairy forms in the stories, that seem to glide upon air; or like the dreams which the gods, as poets tell, send down to happy mortals. (*Catherine shows her pleasure in his compliments.*) 10 My love, you are a marvel of nature, and a triumph of art; you have all charms but speech. (*Catherine turns away sobbing slightly.*) Shouldn't you be glad to have that, too? (*She turns back, intensely interested.*) Shouldn't you be happy to let your lips utter all the pretty thoughts 15 I can read in your eyes? Shouldn't you be pleased to show your wit? (*She waves her handkerchief in glee.*) Shouldn't you like to tell your husband how you love him? Wouldn't it be delightful to call him your treasure and sweetheart? Yes, surely! . . . (*They rise. Catherine 20 is full of pleased animation.*) Well, I've a piece of good news for you, my love. . . . A great doctor is coming here presently, who can make you talk. (*Catherine shows her satisfaction, dancing gracefully up and down.*) He will untie your tongue and never hurt you a bit. 25

(*Catherine's movements express charming and joyous impatience. A Blind Man goes by in the street playing a lively old-fashioned country dance. He stops and calls out in a doleful voice: "Charity, good gentlemen and*

---

LINE 29. *doleful*: mournful.

# The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

ladies." *Léonard motions him away, but Catherine pleads for him by her gestures, indicating that he is blind. Léonard yields and goes back to his writing-table. She stands at the window listening while the Blind Man sings.)*

## 5 *The Blind Man.*

There's lots of good fish in the sea,

La dee ra, la dee ra ;

Now who will come and fish with me?

La dee ra, la dee ra ;

10 Now who'll with me a-fishing go?

My dainty, dainty damsel, O !

Come fish the livelong day with me,

La dee ra, la dee ra,

And who will then be caught? — we'll see !

15 La dee ra, dee ra, day.

*(Toward the end of the stanza Catherine glances at Léonard and sees that she is unobserved ; she steals to the street door as the Blind Man begins the second stanza there ; during this stanza she dances to him and frolics around the stage as he*  
20 *sings.)*

## *The Blind Man.*

Along the rippling river's bank,

La dee ra, la dee ra,

Along the wimpling water's bank,

25 La dee ra, la dee ra,

Along the bank so shady O

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LINE 24. wimpling: rippling.

# BLIND MAN'S SONG AND DANCE

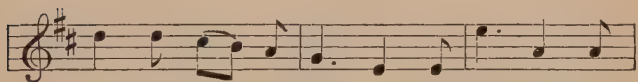
(To the tune of *Dargason*)



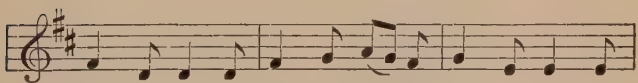
There's lots of good fish in the sea, La



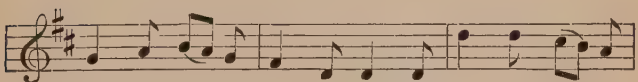
dee ra, la dee ra; Now who will come and



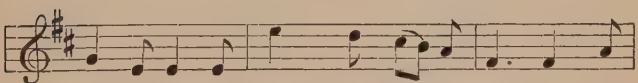
fish with me? La dee ra, la dee ra; Now



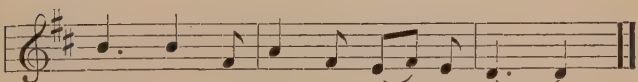
who'll with me a - fish - ing go? My dain - ty, dain - ty



dam - sel, O! Come fish the live - long day with me, And



who will then be caught! — we'll see! La dee ra, la



dee ra, La dee ra, dee ra, day.

# The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

I met the miller's lady, O  
And danced with her the livelong day  
La dee ra, la dee ra,  
And oh! I danced my heart away!  
La dee ra, dee ra, day.

5

(*The Blind Man stops playing and singing, and says, in a hollow and terrifying voice: "Charity, good gentlemen and ladies."*)

*Léonard (who has been buried in his documents and no-*  
10 *ticed nothing, now drives the Blind Man off the stage with*  
*objurgations). Vagabond, robber, ruffian! (Throws a lot*  
*of brief-bags and books at his head; then speaks to Cather-*  
*ine, who has gone back to her place.) My love, since you*  
*came downstairs, I haven't been wasting my time; I have*  
15 *sentenced fourteen men and six women to the pillory; and*  
*distributed, among seventeen different people — (He*  
*counts up) six, twenty-four, thirty-two, forty-four, forty-*  
*seven; and nine, fifty-six; and eleven, sixty-seven; and*  
*ten, seventy-seven; and eight, eighty-five; and twenty,*  
20 *a hundred and five — a hundred and five years in the*  
*galleys. Doesn't that make you realize the great power*  
*of a judge? How can I help feeling some pride in it?*

(*Catherine, who has stopped her work, leans on the table,*  
*and smilingly watches her husband. Then sits down on the*  
25 *table, which is covered with brief-bags.*)

---

LINE 11. *objurgations* (öb'jür-gā'shŭnz): scoldings. 15. *pil-*  
*lory*: a framework in which an offender is fastened by the neck  
and ears. 21. *galleys*: sea-going vessels propelled by oars. Con-  
victs were sentenced to labor at the oars of a galley.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

*Léonard (making as if to pull the bags from under her).*  
My love, you are hiding great criminals from my justice.  
Thieves and murderers. But I will not pursue them, their  
place of refuge is sacred.

*(A Chimney Sweep passes in the street, calling: "Sweep 5  
your chimneys, my ladies; sweep them clear and clean."  
Léonard and Catherine kiss across the table. But, seeing  
the Doctors arriving, Catherine runs off up the stairs.)*

### SCENE III

*(Enter, in formal procession, GILLES, leading the line and  
imitating a trumpeter, then the two Doctors' Attendants, 10  
then MASTER SIMON and MASTER JEAN. The Attendants,  
one carrying the case of instruments, take their stand on either  
side of the door. The Doctor and Surgeon bow formally to  
the audience.)*

*Gilles.* Your Honor, here's the great doctor you sent for. 15  
*Master Simon (bowing).* Yes, I am Master Simon  
Colline himself. . . . And this is Master Jean Maugier,  
surgeon. You called for our services?

*Léonard.* Yes, sir, to make a dumb woman speak.

*Master Simon.* Good! We must wait for Master 20  
Séraphin Dulaurier, apothecary. As soon as he comes we  
will proceed to operate according to our knowledge and  
understanding.

*Léonard.* Ah! You really need an apothecary to  
make a dumb woman speak? 25

*Master Simon.* Yes, sir; to doubt it is to show total  
ignorance of the relations of the organs to each other,

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

and of their mutual interdependence. Master Sérafin Dulaurier will soon be here.

*Master Jean Maugier* (suddenly bellowing out in stentorian tones). Oh! how grateful we should be to learned doctors like Master Simon Colline, who labor to preserve us in health and comfort us in sickness. Oh! how worthy of praise and of blessings are these noble doctors who follow in their profession the rules of scientific theory and long practice.

10 *Master Simon* (bowing slightly). You are much too kind, Master Jean Maugier.

*Léonard*. While we are waiting for the apothecary, won't you take some light refreshment, gentlemen?

*Master Simon*. Most happy.

15 *Master Jean*. Delighted.

*Léonard*. Alizon! . . . So then, Master Simon Colline, you will perform a slight operation and make my wife speak?

*Master Simon*. Say, rather, I shall order the operation. 20 I command, Master Jean Maugier executes. . . . Have you your instruments with you, Master Jean?

*Master Jean*. Yes, Master.

(*He claps his hands; the Attendants run forward into the room, and, each holding one side, they unfold the large cloth case of instruments and hold it up, disclosing a huge saw with 25 two-inch teeth, knives, pincers, scissors, a skewer, a bitstock, an enormous bit, etc.*)

*Léonard*. I hope, sirs, you don't intend to use all those?

---

LINE 12. apothecary: druggist. 26. skewer: a long pin of wood to fasten meat in place. 27. bit: a tool for drilling or boring.



## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

*Master Simon.* One must never be caught unarmed by a patient.

*(The Attendants fold up the case and give it to Master Jean; then run back to their positions by the door, as ALIZON, with a large tray, bottles, and glasses, enters from the kitchen.)* 5

*Léonard.* Will you drink, gentlemen?

*(Colline and Maugier take glasses from Alizon and drink, after Alizon has kissed Colline's glass.)*

*Master Simon.* This light wine of yours is not half bad.

*Léonard.* Very kind of you to say so. It's from my 10 own vineyard.

*Master Simon.* You shall send me a cask of it.

*Léonard (to Gilles, who has poured himself a glass full to the brim).* I didn't tell you to drink, you reprobate.

*Master Jean (looking out of the window).* Here is Master 15 Sérafin Dulaurier, the apothecary.

*(Enter MASTER SÉRAFIN. He trots across the stage, stopping to bow to the audience.)*

*Master Simon (peering into the street).* And here is his mule! . . . Or no — 'tis Master Sérafin himself. You 20 never can tell them apart. *(Master Sérafin joins the group in the room.)* Drink, Master Sérafin. It is fresh from the cellar.

*Master Sérafin.* Your good health, my Masters!

*Master Simon (to Alizon).* Pour freely, fair Hebe. 25 Pour right, pour left, pour here, pour there. Whichever

---

LINE 25. *Hebe:* in Greek mythology, the goddess of youth and cupbearer to the gods on Olympus.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

way she turns, she shows new charms. Are you not proud, my girl, of your trim figure?

*Alizon.* For all the good it does me, there is no reason to be proud of it. Charms are not worth much unless they are hidden in silk and brocade.

*Master Sérafin.* Your good health, my Masters!

*(They all drink, and make Alizon drink with them.)*

*Alizon.* You like to fool with us. But free gratis for nothing.

10 *Master Simon.* Now we are all here, shall we go see the patient?

*Léonard.* I will show you the way, gentlemen.

*Master Simon.* After you, Master Maugier, you go first.

15 *Master Maugier* (*glass in one hand, case of instruments in the other*). I'll go first, since the place of honor is the rear. *(He crosses to the left, and goes behind the table toward the door, following Botal.)*

*Master Simon.* After you, Master Sérafin Dulaurier.

### ACT II

20 *The same scene. Four or five hours have elapsed.*

#### SCENE I

*Master Adam.* Good afternoon, your Honor. How are you this afternoon?

*Léonard.* Well, fairly well. And how are you?

*Master Adam.* Well as can be. Excuse my besieging  
25 you, your Honor, my dear comrade. Have you looked

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

into the case of my young ward who's been robbed by her guardian?

*Léonard.* Not yet, Master Adam Fumée. . . . But what's that you say? You've been robbing your ward?

*Master Adam.* No, no, never think it, your Honor. I said "my" out of pure interest in her. But I am not her guardian, thank God! I'm her lawyer. And, if she gets back her estate, which is no small estate either, then I shall be her husband; yes, I've had the foresight to make her fall in love with me already. And so, I shall be greatly obliged to you if you'll examine her case at the earliest possible moment. All you have to do is to read the statement I gave you; that contains everything you need to know about the case.

*Léonard.* Your statement is there, Master Adam, on my table. I should have looked through it already, if I hadn't been so besieged. But I've been entertaining the flower of the medical faculty here. (*Suddenly seizing him by the shoulders and shaking him*) 'Twas your advice brought this trouble upon me.

20

*Master Adam.* Why, what do you mean?

*Léonard.* I sent for the famous doctor you told me about, Master Simon Colline. He came, with a surgeon and an apothecary; he examined my wife, Catherine, from head to foot, to see if she was dumb. Then, the surgeon cut my dear Catherine's tongue-ligament, the apothecary gave her a pill — and she spoke.

*Master Adam.* She spoke? Did she need a pill, to speak?

*Léonard.* Yes, because of the interdependence of the organs.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

*Master Adam.* Oh! Ah! . . . Anyhow, the main point is, she spoke. And what did she say?

*Léonard.* She said: "Bring me my looking-glass!"  
And, seeing me quite overcome by my feelings, she added,  
5 "You old goose, you shall give me a new satin gown and a velvet-trimmed cape for my birthday."

*Master Adam.* And she kept on talking?

*Léonard.* She hasn't stopped yet.

*Master Adam.* And yet you don't thank me for my  
10 advice; you don't thank me for having sent you to that wonderful doctor? Aren't you overjoyed to hear your wife speak?

*Léonard (sourly).* Yes, certainly. I thank you with all my heart, Master Adam Fumée, and I am overjoyed to  
15 hear my wife speak.

*Master Adam.* No! You do not show as much satisfaction as you ought to. There is something you are keeping back — something that's worrying you.

*Léonard.* Where did you get such a notion?

20 *Master Adam.* From your face. . . . What is bothering you? Isn't your wife's speech clear?

*Léonard.* Yes, it's clear — and abundant. I must admit, its abundance would be a trial to me if it kept up at the rate which it started at.

25 *Master Adam.* Ah! . . . I feared *that* beforehand, your Honor. But you mustn't be cast down too soon. Perhaps this flood of words will ebb. It is the first overflow of a spring too long bottled up. . . . My best congratulations, your Honor. My ward's name is Erme-  
30 line de la Garandière. Don't forget her name; show her

---

LINE 29. *Ermeline*: ârm'lên'.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

favor, and you will find proper gratitude. I will be back later in the day.

*Léonard.* Master Adam Fumée, I will look into your case at once.

*(Exit Master Adam Fumée.)*

5

### SCENE II

*(Catherine is heard off stage singing the Blind Man's song; LÉONARD starts, shakes his head, hurries to his writing-table and sits down to work. CATHERINE, still singing, enters gayly, and goes to him at the table.)*

*Léonard (reading).* "Statement, on behalf of Ermeline-<sup>10</sup> Jacinthe-Marthe de la Garandière, gentlewoman."

*Catherine (standing behind his chair, and first finishing her song: "La dee ra, dee ra, day," then speaking with great volubility).* What are you doing, my dear? You seem busy. You work too much. *(She goes to the window-<sup>15</sup> seat and takes up her embroidery.)* Aren't you afraid it will make you ill? You must rest once in a while. Why don't you tell me what you are doing, dear?

*Léonard.* My love, I . . .

*Catherine.* Is it such a great secret? Can't I know<sup>20</sup> about it?

*Léonard.* My love, I . . .

*Catherine.* If it's a secret, don't tell me.

*Léonard.* Won't you give me a chance to answer? I am examining a case and preparing to draw up a verdict on it.<sup>25</sup>

---

LINE 11. Jacinthe-Marthe: zhá'sánt' márt. 15. volubility: fluency.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

*Catherine.* Is drawing up a verdict so very important?

*Léonard.* Most certainly it is. (*Catherine sits at the window singing and humming to herself, and looking out.*)

In the first place, people's honor, their liberty, and sometimes even their life, may depend on it; and furthermore, the Judge must show therein both the depth of his thought and the finish of his style.

*Catherine.* Then examine your case and prepare your verdict, my dear. I'll be silent.

10 *Léonard.* That's right. . . . "Ermeline-Jacinthe-Marthe de la Garandière, gentlewoman . . . "

*Catherine.* My dear, which do you think would be more becoming to me, a damask gown, or a velvet suit with a Turkish skirt?

15 *Léonard.* I don't know, I . . .

*Catherine.* I think a flowered satin would suit my age best, especially a light-colored one, with a *small* flower pattern.

*Léonard.* Perhaps so. But . . .

20 *Catherine.* And don't you think, my dear, that it is quite improper to have a hoop-skirt very full? Of course, a skirt must have *some* fullness . . . or else you don't seem dressed at all; so, we mustn't let it be scanty. That fashion won't last, I'm sure; some day the court ladies  
25 will give it up, and then every woman in town will make haste to follow their example. Don't you think so?

*Leonard.* Yes! Yes! But . . .

*Catherine.* Now, about high heels. . . . They must be made just right. A woman is judged by her foot-gear —

---

LINE 13. damask (dăm'ăsk): a rich silk fabric woven in elaborate patterns.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

you can always tell a real fine lady by her shoes. You agree with me, don't you, dear?

*Léonard.* Yes, yes, yes, but . . .

*Catherine.* Then write out your verdict. I shan't say another word. 5

*Léonard.* That's right. (*Reading, and making notes*) "Now, the guardian of the said young lady, namely, Hugo Thomas of Piédeloup, gentleman, stole from the said young lady her —"

*Catherine.* My dear, if one were to — 10

*Léonard.* My darling, won't you please be silent one moment? Or go and talk somewhere else? I'm all at sea.

*Catherine.* There, there, dear; don't worry. I shan't say another word! Not a word!

*Léonard.* Good! (*Writing*) "The said Piédeloup, 15  
gentleman, counting both hay crops and apple crops . . ."

*Catherine.* My dear, we shall have for supper to-night some minced mutton and what's left of that goose one of your suitors gave us. Tell me, is that enough? Shall you be satisfied with it? I hate being mean, and like to 20  
set a good table, but what's the use of serving courses which will only be sent back to the pantry untouched? The cost of living is getting higher all the time. Chickens, and salads, and meats, and fruit have all gone up so, it will soon be cheaper to order dinner sent in by a caterer. 25

*Léonard.* I beg you . . . (*Writing*) "An orphan by birth . . ."

*Catherine.* Yes, that's what we're coming to. No home life any more. You'll see. Why, a capon, or a partridge,

---

LINE 8. **Hugo Thomas:** ü'gō tō'mā'. **Piédeloup:** pyā'd'lōō'.  
29. **capon** (kā'pōn): a cock fattened for the table.



## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

or a hare, cost less all stuffed and roasted than if you buy them alive at the market. That is because the cook-shops buy in large quantities and get a big discount; so they can sell to us at a profit. I don't say we ought to get our regular meals from the cook-shop. We can do our everyday plain cooking at home, and it's better to; but when we invite people in, or give a formal dinner party, then it saves time and money to have the dinner sent in. Why, at less than an hour's notice, the cook-shops and cake-shops will get you up a dinner for a dozen, or twenty, or fifty people; the cook-shop will send in meat and poultry, the caterer will send galantines and sauces and relishes, the pastry-cook will send pies and tarts and sweets and desserts; and it's all so convenient. Now, don't you think so yourself, Léonard?

Léonard. Please, please!

(Léonard tries to write through the following speech, murmuring: "An orphan by birth, a capon by birth, an olla-podrida," etc.)

Catherine. It's no wonder everything goes up. People are getting more extravagant every day. If they are entertaining a friend, or even a relative, they don't think they can do with only three courses, soup, meat, and dessert. No, they have to have meats in five or six different styles, with so many sauces, or dressings, or pasties, that it's a regular olla-podrida. Now, don't you think that is going too far, my dear? For my part I just cannot under-

---

LINE 12. **galantines**: cold chicken. 18. **olla-podrida** (øl'à-pô-drè'dà): a dish of meat and vegetables stewed together.

25. **pasties**: meat pies.



## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

stand how people can take pleasure in stuffing themselves with so many kinds of food. Not that I despise a good table; why, I'm even a bit of an epicure myself. "Not too plenty, but dainty," suits *my* taste. Now, what I like best of all is capons' kidneys with artichoke hearts.<sup>5</sup> But you, Léonard, I suspect you have a weakness for tripe and sausages. Oh, fie! Oh, fie! How can any one enjoy sausages?

*Léonard (his head in his hands).* I shall go mad! I know I shall go mad. 10

*Catherine (running to the table behind him).* My dear, I just shan't say another word — not a single word. For I can see that my chattering *might* possibly disturb your work.

*Léonard.* If you would only do as you say! 15

*Catherine (returning to her place).* I shan't even open my lips.

*Léonard.* Splendid!

*Catherine (busily embroidering).* You see, dear, I'm not saying another word. 20

*Léonard.* Yes.

*Catherine.* I'm letting you work in perfect peace and quiet.

*Léonard.* Yes.

*Catherine.* And write out your verdict quite undis-<sup>25</sup> turbed. Is it almost done?

*Léonard.* It never will be — if you don't keep still. (*Writing*) "Item, One hundred twenty pounds a year, which the said unworthy guardian stole from the poor orphan girl . . ."

30

---

LINE 3. **epicure:** one who enjoys the pleasures of the table.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

*Catherine.* Listen! Ssh-sh! Listen! Didn't you hear a cry of fire? (*Léonard runs to the window, looks out, and then shakes his head at Catherine.*) I thought I did. But perhaps I may have been mistaken. Is there anything  
5 so terrifying as a fire? Fire is even worse than water. Last year I saw the houses on Exchange Bridge burn up. What confusion! What havoc! The people threw their furniture into the river, and jumped out of the windows. They didn't know what they were about; you see, fear  
10 drove them out of their senses.

*Léonard.* Lord, have mercy upon me!

*Catherine.* Oh! What makes you groan so, dear? Tell me, tell me what is the matter?

*Léonard.* I can't endure it another minute.

15 *Catherine.* You must rest, Léonard. You mustn't work so hard. It isn't reasonable. You have no right to . . .

*Léonard.* Will you never be still?

*Catherine.* Now, don't be cross, dear. I'm not saying  
20 a word.

*Léonard.* Would to Heaven!

(*MADAME DE LA BRUINE, followed by her footman, crosses the stage during the following speech.*)

*Catherine (looking out of the window).* Oh! Here comes  
25 Madame de la Bruine, the attorney's wife! She's got on a silk-lined hood and a heavy puce-colored cape over her brocade gown. And she has a lackey with a face like a smoked herring. Léonard, she's looking this way; I

---

LINE 26. puce (pūs): a dark brown or purple brown.  
27. lackey: servant.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

believe she's coming to call. Hurry and arrange the chairs and bring up an armchair for her; we must show people proper respect according to their rank and station. She is stopping at our door. No, she's going on. She's gone on. Perhaps I was mistaken. Perhaps it was somebody else. 5 You can't be sure about recognizing people. But if it wasn't she, it was somebody like her, and even very much like her. Now I think of it, I'm sure it was she, there simply couldn't be another woman in Paris so like Madame de la Bruine. My dear . . . my dear . . . would you 10 have liked to have Madame de la Bruine call on us? (*She sits down on his table.*) I know you don't like rattle-tongued women; it's lucky for you that you didn't marry her; she jabbars like a magpie; she does nothing but gabble from morning to night. What a chatterbox! And 15 sometimes she tells stories which are not to her credit. (*Léonard, driven beyond endurance, climbs up on his step-ladder and sits down on one of the middle steps, and tries to write there.*) In the first place, she always gives you a list of all the presents her husband has received. It's a 20 dreadful bore to hear her tell them over. (*She climbs up on the other side of the double step-ladder and sits down opposite Léonard.*) What is it to us, if the Attorney de la Bruine receives presents of game, or flour, or fresh fish, or even a sugar-loaf? But Madame de la Bruine takes 25 good care *not* to tell you that one day her husband received a great Amiens pasty, and when he opened it he found nothing but an enormous pair of horns.

*Léonard.* My head will burst!

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LINE 27. **Amiens** (â'myăn'): a cathedral town in northern France.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

(*He takes refuge on top of one of the cabinets, with his writing-case and papers.*)

Catherine (*at the top of the ladder*). And did you see my fine lady, who's really no lady at all, wearing an embroidered cape, just like any princess? Don't you think it's ridiculous! But there! Nowadays everybody dresses above his station, men as well as women. Your court secretaries try to pass for gentlemen; they wear gold chains and jewelry, and feathers in their hats; all the same, any one can tell what they are.

Léonard (*on top of his cupboard*). I've got to the point where I can't answer for the consequences; I feel capable of committing any crime. (*Calling*) Gilles! Gilles! Gilles! The scoundrel! Gilles! Alizon! Gilles! Gilles!  
15 (*Enter GILLES.*) Go quick and find the famous Doctor in Buci Square, Master Simon Colline, and tell him to come back here at once for a matter far more needful and urgent than before.

Gilles. Yes, your Honor. (*Exit.*)

20 Catherine. What's the matter, my dear? You seem excited. Perhaps the air is close. No? It's the east wind, then, don't you think? or the fish you ate for dinner?

Léonard (*frantically gesticulating on top of his cupboard*).  
25 *Non omnia possumus omnes.* It is the office of servants to clean crockery, of mercers to measure ribbon, of monks to beg, of birds to drop dirt around everywhere, and of women to cackle and chatter like mad. Oh! How I

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LINE 25. *Non omnia possumus omnes*: We cannot all do everything. 26. *merciers*: dealers in cloth or silks.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

regret, you saucy baggage, that I had your tongue loosed. Don't you worry, though — the famous doctor shall soon make you more dumb than ever you were.

*(He catches up armfuls of the brief-bags which are piled on his cupboard of refuge, and throws them at Catherine's head; she jumps nimbly down from the ladder and runs off in terror, crying.)*

Catherine. Help! Murder! My husband's gone mad! Help! help!

Léonard. Alizon! Alizon!

10

*(Enter ALIZON.)*

Alizon. What a life! Sir, have you turned murderer?

Léonard. Alizon, follow her, stay by her, and don't let her come down. As you value your life, Alizon, don't let her come down. For if I hear another word from her, I shall 15 go raving mad, and who knows what I might do to her — and to you. Go! Off with you!

*(Alizon goes upstairs.)*

### SCENE III

*(LÉONARD is still on top of the cabinet or book-case. MASTER ADAM and Mlle. DE LA GARANDIÈRE enter and 20 climb up on each side of the step-ladder. A Lackey, with an enormous basket on his head, kneels in front, center.)*

Master Adam. Permit me, your Honor, with the object of softening your heart and arousing your pity, to present before you this young orphan girl, despoiled by a 25

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

grasping guardian, who implores you for justice. Her eyes will speak to your heart more eloquently than my voice. Mlle. de la Garandière brings you her prayers and her tears; she adds thereunto one ham, two duck  
5 pies, a goose, and two goslings. She ventures to hope in exchange for a favoring verdict.

*Léonard.* Mademoiselle, you arouse my interest. . . . Have you anything to add in defense of your case?

*Mlle. de la Garandière.* You are only too kind, sir; I  
10 must rest my case on what my lawyer has just said.

*Léonard.* That is all?

*Mlle. de la Garandière.* Yes, sir.

*Léonard.* She knows how to speak — and to stop. The poor orphan touches my heart. (*To the Lackey*) Carry  
15 that package to the pantry.

(*Exit Lackey.*)

(*Léonard.*) Master Adam, when you came in, I was just drawing up the decree which I shall presently render in this young lady's case. (*He starts to come down from*  
20 *his cabinet.*)

*Master Adam.* What, up on that cupboard?

*Léonard.* I don't know where I am; my head is going round and round. Do you want to hear the decree? I need to read it over myself. (*Reading*) "Whereas,  
25 Mlle. de la Garandière, spinster, and an orphan by birth, did fraudulently, deceitfully, and with injurious intent, steal, filch, and subtract from her lawful guardian, Squire Piédeloup, gentleman, ten loads of hay and eighty pounds of fresh-water fish, and whereas, there is nothing so terrify-

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LINE 27. **filch:** to steal.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

ing as a fire, and whereas, the State's Attorney did receive an Amiens pasty in which were two great horns . . ."

*Master Adam.* What in Heaven's name are you reading?

*Léonard.* Don't ask me. I don't know myself. I<sub>5</sub> think my brains have been brayed in a mortar, for two hours running. (*He breaks down and weeps on their shoulders.*) I'm a driveling idiot. . . . And all your fault, too, Master Adam Fumée. . . . If that fine doctor of yours hadn't restored my wife's speech . . .

10

*Master Adam.* Don't blame me, Master Léonard. I forewarned you. I told you right enough, that you must think twice before untying a woman's tongue.

*Léonard.* Ah, Master Adam Fumée, how I long for the time when my Catherine was dumb. No! Nature has<sub>15</sub> no scourge more fearsome than a rattle-tongued female. . . . But I count on the doctors to recall their cruel gift. I have sent for them. Here's the surgeon now.

### SCENE IV

(*Enter MASTER JEAN MAUGIER.*)

*Master Jean Maugier.* Your Honor, I bid you good day.<sub>20</sub> Here is Master Simon Colline coming forward upon his mule, followed by Master Sérafin Dulaurier, apothecary. About him crowds the adoring populace: chambermaids, trussing up their petticoats, and scullions with hampers on their heads, form his escort of honor.

25

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LINE 8. *driveling*: twaddling; talking foolishly. 24. *trussing*: fastening. *scullions*: servants of low rank, pot-cleaners.

# The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

(Enter MASTER SIMON COLLINE and his suite.)

Master Jean Maugier. Oh! how justly does Master Simon Colline command the admiration of the people when he goes through the city clad in his doctor's robe, his square cap, his cassock and bands. Oh! how grateful we should be to those noble doctors who labor to preserve us in health and comfort us in sickness. Ohhhh! how . . .

Master Simon (to Master Jean Maugier). Have done; 'tis enough.

10 Léonard. Master Simon Colline, I was in haste to see you. I urgently beg for your services.

Master Simon. For yourself? What is your disease? Where is the pain?

Léonard. No! For my wife; the one who was dumb.

15 Master Simon. Has she any trouble now?

Léonard. None at all. I have all the trouble now.

Master Simon. What? The trouble is with you, and it's your wife you want cured?

Léonard. Master Simon Colline, she talks too much. 20 You should have given her speech, but not so much speech. Since you've cured her of her dumbness, she drives me mad. I cannot bear another word from her. I've called you in to make her dumb again.

Master Simon. 'Tis impossible!

25 Léonard. What's that? You can't take away the power of speech which you gave her?

Master Simon. No! That I cannot do. My skill is great, but it stops short of that.

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LINE 1. *suite*: company of attendants or followers.  
4. *cassock*: a long close-fitting garment.



## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

(*Léonard in despair turns to each of them in succession.*)

*Master Jean Maugier.* We cannot do it.

*Master Sérafin.* Our greatest efforts would have not the slightest result.

*Master Simon.* We have medicines to make women speak; we have none to make them keep silent.

*Léonard.* You haven't? Is that your last word? You drive me to despair.

*Master Simon.* Alas, your Honor! (*He advances to the center, claps his hands for attention, and declaims.*)<sup>10</sup> There is no elixir, balm, magisterium, opiate, unguent, ointment, local application, electuary, nor panacea, that can cure the excess of glottal activity in woman. Treacle and orvietan would be without virtue, and all the herbs described by Dioscorides would have no effect. 15

*Léonard.* Can this be true?

*Master Simon.* Sir, you dare not so offend me as to doubt it.

*Léonard.* Then I am a ruined man. There's nothing left for me to do but tie a stone around my neck and jump<sup>20</sup> into the Seine. (*He rushes to the window and tries to jump out, but is held back by the doctors.*) I cannot live in this hubbub. (*The doctors drag him back, set him down, and, with Master Adam, stand in a circle in front of him.*) If

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LINE 11. **elixir** (ê-lĭk'sēr): balm. **magisterium** (măj'is-tê'rĭ-ŭm): chemical precipitate. **unguent** (ŭŋ'gwěnt): ointment. 12. **electuary** (ê-lĕk'tŭ-ă-rĭ): confectionery combined with medicine. **panacea** (păn'ă-sē'ă): a pretended remedy for all diseases. 13. **glottal activity**: tongue and vocal cord action. **Treacle** (trĕ'k'l) and **orvietan** (ôr'vĭ-ē'tăn): syrup mixed with an antidote for poison.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

you don't want me to drown myself straightway, then you doctors must find me some cure.

*Master Simon.* There is none, I tell you, for your wife.  
- But there might be one for you, if you would consent to  
5 take it.

*Léonard.* You give me a little hope. Explain it, for Heaven's sake.

*Master Simon.* For the clack of a wife, there's but one cure in life. Let her husband be deaf. 'Tis the only relief.

10 *Léonard.* What do you mean?

*Master Simon.* Just what I say.

*Master Adam.* Don't you understand? That's the finest discovery yet. Since he can't make your wife dumb, this great doctor offers to make you deaf.

15 *Léonard.* Make me really deaf? Oh! . . . (*He starts to rise, but is pushed back by Master Simon, who stands directly in front of him.*)

*Master Simon.* Certainly. I can cure you at once, and for all time, of your wife's verbal hypertrophy, by  
20 means of cophosis.

*Léonard.* By cophosis? What is cophosis?

*Master Simon.* 'Tis what is vulgarly called deafness. Do you see any disadvantages in becoming deaf?

*Léonard.* Certainly I do!

25 *Master Jean Maugier.* You think so?

*Master Sérafin.* For instance?

*Master Simon.* You are a Judge. What disadvantage is there in a Judge's being deaf?

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LINE 19. **verbal hypertrophy** (vûr'băl hî-pûr'trô-fî): abnormal development of vocal activity. 20. **cophosis** (kô-fô'sîs): deafness.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

*Master Adam.* None at all. Believe me; I am a practicing lawyer. There is none at all.

*Master Simon.* What harm could come to justice thereby?

*Master Adam.* No harm at all. Quite the contrary.<sup>5</sup> Master Léonard Botal could then hear neither lawyers nor prosecutors, and so would run no risk of being deceived by a lot of lies.

*Léonard.* That's true.

*Master Adam.* He will judge all the better.

10

*Léonard.* May be so.

*Master Adam.* Never doubt it.

*Léonard.* But how do you perform this . . .

*Master Jean Maugier.* This cure.

*Master Simon.* Cophosis, vulgarly called deafness, may<sup>15</sup> be brought about in several ways. It is produced either by otorrhœa, or by sclerosis of the ear, or by otitis, or else by ankylosis of the ossicles. But these various means are long and painful.

*Léonard.* I reject them! . . . I reject them abso-<sup>20</sup>lutely.

*Master Simon.* You are right. It is far better to induce cophosis by means of a certain white powder which I have in my medicine-case; a pinch of it, placed in the ear, is enough to make you as deaf as Heaven when it's angry,<sup>25</sup> or as deaf as a post.

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LINE 17. *otorrhœa* (ō'tō-rē'ā): flowing of the ear. *sclerosis* (sklē-rō'sīs): hardening of the membrane of the ear. *otitis* (ō-tī'tīs): inflammation of the membrane of the ear. 18. *an-*  
*chylosis* (ăŋ'kī-lō'sīs) **of the ossicles** (ôs'y-k'lz): stiffening of the ear bones.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

*Léonard.* Many thanks, Master Simon Colline; keep your powder. I will not be made deaf.

*Master Simon.* What? You won't be made deaf? What? You refuse cophosis? You decline the cure which you begged for just now? Ah, 'tis a case but too common, and one calculated to make a judicious physician grieve, to see a recalcitrant patient refuse the salutary medicament . . .

*Master Jean Maugier.* And flee from the care, which would cure all his ailments . . .

*Master Sérafin.* And decline to be healed. Oh!

*Master Adam.* Do not decide too quickly, Master Léonard Botal; do not deliberately reject this slight affliction which will save you from far greater torment.

*Léonard.* No! I will not be deaf; I'll have none of your powder.

### SCENE V

*Alizon (rushes in from the stairs, stopping her ears).* I can't stand it. My head will burst. No human creature can stay and listen to such a clatter. There's no stopping her. I feel as if I'd been caught in the mill-wheel for two mortal hours.

*(Catherine is heard off stage singing the Blind Man's song.)*

*Léonard.* Wretch! Don't let her come down. Alizon! Gilles! Lock her in.

*Master Adam.* Oh! Sir!

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LINE 7. **recalcitrant** (rê-kāl'sî-trănt): rebellious. **salutary medicament** (săl'û-tâ-rî mē-dîk'â-měnt): healthful cure.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

*Mlle. de la Garandière.* Oh! Sir, can your heart be so cruel as to want to lock the poor lady up all alone?

(CATHERINE is heard singing again. Léonard starts for the ladder, and climbs it as she enters.)

*Catherine.* What a fine large assembly! I am your humble servant, gentlemen. (*She curtsies.*)

*Master Simon Colline.* Well, madam? Aren't you pleased with us? Didn't we do our work well in loosing your tongue?

*Catherine.* Fairly well, sirs; and I'm truly grateful to you. At first, to be sure, I could speak but haltingly and bring out only a few words; now, however, I have some degree of facility; but I use it with great moderation, for a garrulous wife is a scourge in the house. Yes, gentlemen, I should be in despair if you could so much as suspect me of loquacity, or if you could think for a moment that any undue desire to talk could get hold on me. (*Léonard, on top of the cabinet, laughs wildly.*) And so, I beg you to let me justify myself here and now in the eyes of my husband, who, for some inconceivable reason, has become prejudiced against me, and taken it into his head that my conversation bothered him while he was drawing up a decree. . . . Yes, a decree in favor of an orphan girl deprived of her father and mother in the flower of her youth. But no matter for that. (*She crosses to the ladder and starts to go up one side of it. Léonard climbs down the other side, goes first to one doctor, then to another, and finally sits down on the bench in front of the table.*) I was sitting

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LINE 14. garrulous: given to continuous talking. 16. loquacity (lô-kwă's'î-tî): talkativeness.

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

beside him and hardly saying a single word to him. My only speech was my presence. Can a husband object to that? Can he take it ill when his wife stays with him and seeks to enjoy his company, as she ought? (*She goes 5 to her husband and sits down beside him. During the rest of the speech all those present, one after another, sink down in exhaustion at listening to her.*) The more I think of it, the less I can understand your impatience. What can have caused it? You must stop pretending it was my talka-  
10 tiveness. That idea won't hold water one moment. My dear, you must have some grievance against me which I know nothing about: I *beg* you to tell me what it is. You *owe* me an explanation, and so soon as I find out what displeased you I will see to it that you have no reason to  
15 complain of the same thing again — if only you'll tell me what it is. For I am eager to save you from the slightest reason for dissatisfaction. My mother used to say: "Between husband and wife, there should be no secrets." And she was quite right. Married people have only too often  
20 brought down terrible catastrophes on themselves or their households just because they didn't tell each other everything. You must never have secrets, even for good reasons. My dear, you can speak freely before these gentlemen. I know I have done nothing wrong; so whatever you say can  
25 only prove the more clearly how innocent I am.

*Léonard (who has for some time been trying in vain by gestures and exclamations to stop Catherine's flow of words, and has been showing signs of extreme impatience). The powder! Give me the powder! Master Simon Colline,*  
30 *your powder — your white powder.*

*Master Simon.* Never was a deafness-producing powder

## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

more needed, that's sure. Be so kind as to sit down, your Honor. Master Sérafin Dulaurier will inject the cophosis powder in your ears.

*(The doctors crowd about Léonard, and inject the powder first in one ear and then in the other.)*

5

Master Sérafin. Gladly, sir, gladly.

Master Simon. There! 'Tis done.

Catherine *(to Master Adam Fumée)*. Master Adam, you are a lawyer. Make my husband hear reason. Tell him that he must listen to me, that it's unheard of to condemn 10 a wife without letting her state her case, tell him it's not right to throw brief-bags at your wife's head — yes, he threw brief-bags at my head — unless you are forced to it by some very strong feeling or reason. . . . Or no! no, I'll tell him myself. *(To Léonard)* My dear, answer me, 15 have I ever failed you in anything? Am I a naughty woman? Am I a bad wife? No, I have been faithful to my duty; I may even say I have loved my duty. . . .

Léonard *(his face expressing beatitude, as he calmly twirls his thumbs)*. 'Tis delicious. I can't hear a thing. 20

Catherine. Listen to me, Léonard, I love you tenderly. I will open my heart to you. I am not one of those light, frivolous women who are afflicted or consoled by airy nothings, and amused by trifles. *(She puts her arms about him and they rock back and forth, Léonard grinning from 25 ear to ear.)* I need companionship. I need to be understood. That is my nature — I was born so. When I was only seven years old I had a little dog, a little yellow dog. . . . But you're not listening to me. . . .

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LINE 19. *beatitude* : blessedness, happiness.



## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

*Master Simon.* Madam, he can't listen to you, or to any one else. He can't hear.

*Catherine.* What do you mean he can't hear?

*Master Simon.* I mean just that. He can't hear, as  
5 the result of a cure he has just taken.

*(The Blind Man is heard again, playing the same air.)*

*Master Séraphin.* A cure which has produced in him a sweet and pleasant ~~cophosis~~ <sup>cophosis</sup>.

*Catherine.* I'll make him hear, I tell you.

10 *Master Simon.* No, you won't, madam; it can't be done.

*Catherine.* You shall see. *(To her husband, affectionately)* My dear, my beloved, my pretty one, my sweetheart, my better-half. . . . You don't hear me? *(She*  
15 *shakes him.)* You monster, you Bluebeard!

*Léonard.* I can't hear her with my ears, but I hear her only too well with my arms, and with my shoulders and back.

*Master Simon.* She is going mad.

20 *Master Maugier.* She has gone mad! Stark staring mad!

*Léonard.* Oh! How can I get away? *(Catherine bites his neck.)* Oh! She has bitten me, I feel myself going mad, too.

25 *(The Blind Man has come forward, playing and singing the first stanza of his song. Meanwhile Catherine and Léonard go singing and dancing about, and bite the others, who likewise go mad and sing and dance wildly, all at the front of the stage. The other characters of the play come in — the Candle*  
30 *Man, Chimney Sweep, MADAME DE LA BRUINE, etc.; all are*







## The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife

*caught and bitten, and join in the song and the dance, which resolves itself into the old-fashioned country "right and left," as they sing the second stanza.)*

*All.*

Along the rippling river's bank, 5  
La dee ra, la dee ra,  
Along the wimpling water's bank,  
La dee ra, la dee ra,  
Along the bank so shady O  
I met the miller's lady O 10  
And danced with her the livelong day,  
La dee ra, la dee ra,  
And oh! I danced my heart away,  
La dee ra, dee ra, day.

*(As Léonard Botal reaches the center of the front stage, the 15 dance stops a moment for him to speak to the audience.)*

*Léonard.* Good gentlemen and ladies, we pray you to forgive the author all his faults.

*(The dance re-commences, and as the curtain falls all dance off left or right, singing the refrain.) 20*

*All (diminuendo).*

I danced with her the livelong day,  
La dee ra, la dee ra,  
And oh! I danced my heart away,  
La dee ra, dee ra, day. 25

CURTAIN

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LINE 21. *diminuendo* (dĭ-mĭn'ū-ĕn'dō): gradually lessening in volume of sound.



## APPENDIX



## HOW TO STUDY DRAMA

### THE GAME OF "LET'S PRETEND"

"Let's pretend" has been one of the most popular games since the world began. At the mere mention of the word *play*, both young and old are immediately carried from a real land into the kingdom of Make-Believe. Naturally, "dressing-up" adds a pleasant sense of reality to the game. Don't you remember when you were small how you liked to "dress-up" and play that you were someone else? If you were a little girl, you probably played house, or store, or school. If you were a small boy, you very likely pretended that you were a policeman, a fireman, an Indian, a soldier, a cowboy. Later at school, both in the classroom and on the school grounds, play, without doubt, occupied a good deal of your time. Perhaps at recess you played such games as Cat and Rat, Puss in Boots, Frog in the Meadow, Going to Jerusalem, and Statue.

The North American Indians delighted in putting on the skins of animals, in adorning themselves with strings of beads, and in decorating themselves with feathers and paint. Their chief entertainment was pretending a hunt. Some members of the tribe would disguise themselves as animals, others as hunters, and the chase would begin. Onlookers would urge the hunters to the sport by dancing and chanting to music. From the earliest times Indians dramatized their legends as a means of entertainment and

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of devotion. Before an attack, an Indian chieftain would pantomime his anger and vengeance by pretending to pounce upon an imaginary enemy and scalp him. His braves would take up the shout and gesture wildly as they circled in a war dance. They were but grown-ups playing the game of "Let's pretend."

The desire to pretend controls the old almost as much as it does the young, but it finds expression in a different manner. When boys and girls are small, they like to take part in plays; when they are grown up, they like to go to see plays and to read plays. Acting or seeing others act is one of the most popular sources of entertainment throughout life. The small boy takes part in a drama when he plays that he is a mighty hero. The little girl is an actress when she plays house with her dolls. The grown-up enacts the whole of a drama when he attends a play, and lives in imagination through the parts of all the characters.

Drama is the gateway into the wonderland of "Let's pretend." Most of you will probably look back upon your reading and acting of plays as the most interesting and enjoyable part of your school course. A good play lets you stand on the threshold of a world different from your own. Here, in the realm of the imagination, you can have new experiences, meet new people, broaden your interests, and enrich your life. Few people can travel to far-away lands, but plays enable everyone to go in imagination almost anywhere and to meet almost anyone. To see a drama is just like stepping upon a magic carpet and speeding to foreign lands. In *The Philosopher of Butterbiggens* you journey to Scotland. *Told in a Chinese Garden* takes you to China. In *Jeph-*



## How to Study Drama

*thah's Daughter* you catch a glimpse of the Holy Land. *Robin Hood in Sherwood* shows you the beautiful forests of England and the misty glamor of the fairies' woodland. *The Golden Doom* takes you to a country that is on neither land nor sea.

A play introduces you to a great variety of people, for dramatists have the power of creating characters who seem as alive as the people one meets every day. Book friends are sometimes better known to us than our neighbors are. Perhaps the reason for this is that a dramatist frequently draws his characters from the people he meets, and he studies his neighbors more carefully than we do. Drama helps to draw together into one great brotherhood all the people of the world. It does this by picturing to us persons of various countries, showing how much alike people are. No matter how widely dress and manners and languages may vary, there is one thing that never changes, and that is human nature. People quarrel, people laugh, people grieve, people love, people are honest, in Russia as well as in China; in Ireland as well as in America; in England as well as in France. Human beings are drawn together into one great brotherhood by their common interests in life, which drama presents vividly.

You are just about to make the acquaintance of many delightful people in this collection of plays. You must see the characters act and hear them speak, if you wish to become a good reader and a good actor of plays. You must live through their experiences with them. Here are persons who have had interesting experiences. Here is Robin Hood, probably the most beloved and the best known of all adventurers. Here is old David Pirnie,

## Appendix

who makes us smile at him and pity him at the same moment. And what a strange lady is Minikin, that little bisque marionette in her cornflower blue! How well both Minikin and Manikin know people, even if they are but puppets! And Patelin! Such fun does he furnish with his clever, unscrupulous trickery; and, like most tricksters, he is undone by his own trick. How Sheilah pulls at our heart strings! Contact with these various types will help you to understand people about you. This book is a key that will open the door to a society of comrades who will make you rich in mind and heart.

Perhaps you have a dramatic club, or you may become so interested in play-reading that you will band together and start a Little Theater. The plays found in this volume furnish a wealth of material that will satisfy your most varied desire to play the game of "Let's pretend." Nearly all the characters in the plays are actable. To memorize the lines and give a finished production of every play will be impossible, but even if the lines are not memorized, the classroom may be turned into a studio and the rehearsal method of reading be adopted. By this is meant the assigning of parts to students, who come to the front of the room and read the lines, putting in as much action as possible. Actors when beginning the rehearsal of a new play resort to this method, which they call "walking through the play."

Through your classroom study of the plays and through your dramatic club activities, you will, no doubt, develop such a liking for play-reading and acting that you will want to find many other plays suitable for reading and

## How to Study Drama

acting. Names of suitable plays, both in single editions and in collections, are suggested in pages that follow. It may be that your interest in the drama will lead you to write a play.

The pleasure and profit to be had from reading plays will depend, in great measure, upon your ability to picture characters moving upon a stage which your imagination creates as you read. Your success in acting a play will depend largely on your skill in playing the game of "Let's pretend," in which you make your audience see the character as he appears to your imagination. Your expertness in writing a play will be determined chiefly by your own experience and your observations, and by your knowledge and understanding of what a play is and how it is made. Of course, you can enjoy the story of a play without knowing about its development, but knowing the parts of a play and how these are put together will increase your appreciation of play-reading, play-acting, and play-writing. The pages that follow furnish you with information that will help you to understand what people mean when they discuss and criticize plays.

### KINDS OF DRAMA

There are many types of plays. All drama cannot be of the same kind because life itself is varied. Some lives are grave and sad; some seem only merry and happy; others appear romantically beautiful. Most lives are of all these kinds at different times.

Here are the kinds of plays found in this volume:

1. *Tragedy*. A tragedy is a play in which the leading character is overcome by trouble of some kind. *Jephthah's*

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*Daughter* is a tragedy. Sheilah is defeated by the force of circumstances.

2. *Comedy*. A comedy is a play in which the leading character overcomes the obstacles placed in his way and wins in the conflict; thus a comedy ends happily. *The Philosopher of Butterbiggens* is a comedy; David Pirnie succeeds in carrying out his plans.

3. *Farce*. A farce is a comedy in which the situations are too ridiculous to be true, the characters are so exaggerated that they seem to be caricatures, and the motives are absurd and undignified. *Master Pierre Patelin* and *The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife* are farces. Both plays present situations and characters that are exaggerated beyond reality.

4. *Pantomime*. A pantomime is a play in which the story is told entirely by action. It may be either a comedy or a tragedy. *The Seven Gifts* is a pantomime.

5. *Historical Play*. An historical play is one in which some event of history is dramatized. *Daniel Boone* is an example of this type of play.

6. *Puppet Play*. A puppet play is one in which the parts are acted by puppets, or marionettes. A puppet is a small figure in human form, constructed with jointed limbs, which are made to move by means of wires operated by someone from either above or below the stage. *Manikin and Minikin* is a puppet play.

7. *Plays of Fantasy*. In a play of fantasy the action could not take place in real life, but only in the imagination of the writer. Such plays are full of action that is improbable. *Robin Hood in Sherwood*, *The Golden Doom*, and *Alice in Wonderland* are plays of fantasy.

## How to Study Drama

Plays may be described in another way : plays of plot ; plays of character ; plays of atmosphere ; problem plays. Such grouping is determined by the emphasis given to either plot, or character, or atmosphere, or theme. If any one of these is made most prominent in the play, then the play is named because of the special emphasis. *Told in a Chinese Garden* primarily emphasizes plot ; *Alice in Wonderland* emphasizes atmosphere, the atmosphere of charming childhood ; *The Philosopher of Butterbiggens* throws the chief emphasis upon character ; *Manikin and Minikin* is a problem play because the chief purpose of the author seems to be to explain his idea about some phase of life.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF A PLAY

A play is a story told by means of dialogue and action on a stage. Gestures, costumes, scenery, and, sometimes, music accompany the production of a play to give belief in what is presented.

Just as a story must possess the following characteristics, so, too, must a play :

1. *Characters.* The characters are the people who take part in the action.

2. *Setting.* The setting tells when and where the events happen.

3. *Plot.* The story of the play is told in a series of incidents arranged in such a way that there is a beginning, a middle, and an end. This arrangement of incidents is called the plot.

4. *Conflict.* The plot must give an account of a struggle, or conflict. It may be a struggle between two

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persons, or between two groups of people, or the struggle may be a mental one. The characters group themselves; some aid the hero and others work against him. At a given point in the play these two forces meet, or clash, and either one or the other wins.

5. *Suspense*. As the story moves on toward the clashing of the two forces, the account of the incidents must be so told that each one grows more and more exciting. The reader should feel suspense; that is, he should be eager to know the outcome of the struggle. The playwright, wishing to create such interest through suspense, slows down the action here, speeds it up there, drops occasional hints of what may happen, and frequently springs a surprise in the action. When he has made the reader wait long enough, he brings the two forces together in a final struggle and lets the stronger win.

6. *Climax*. With the growth of excitement, the action becomes more and more intense until the highest point of interest is reached with the clashing of the two forces. This is the turning point of the play, known as the *climax*. After the climax the fortunes of the hero grow either worse or better. Thus the climax in *The Philosopher of Butterbiggens* is the squalling of David Pirnie. From the moment that we hear his first piercing cry, we know that he is going to win over Lizzie.

7. *Single Effect*. The story of the play must arouse some feeling in the reader. The emotion may be that of anger, humor, fear, sadness, pity. One emotion, or effect, predominates.

8. *Theme*. The author has discovered something about life that he thinks is worth knowing — a general truth

## How to Study Drama

that he wishes to present ; or he has made a general observation that he thinks would be of interest to others. To pass this truth, or this observation, on to others is the author's chief purpose in writing the play. This underlying purpose is the theme. Almost anyone can read a play just for the story's sake, but to be an intelligent reader, one must be able to discover the theme, or the author's purpose in writing the play. An intelligent reader will ask himself : Is the purpose of the writer to entertain, to present a message or truth, or to give an accurate picture of life? The theme, or purpose, of the play *Daniel Boone* is to give a faithful picture of Daniel Boone, who seems to prove that shrewdness, patience, tact, and alertness will overcome crafty foes. The theme, or the truth, underlying *Spreading the News* is that much harm is done by the spreading of unreliable reports. *Alice in Wonderland* offers a vivid picture of a child's imaginative world, which is the real world turned topsy-turvy.

9. *Style*. Style is the manner in which the play is written. Words frequently used to describe style are : clear, vivid, simple, forceful, humorous, polished, individual.

Features that belong to a play but that do not belong to a story are these :

1. *Stage Properties*. Stage properties consist of all things needed to present the play, such as costumes, scenery, curtains, and other details.

2. *Stage Directions*. Stage directions consist of the instructions that inform the actors how to present the play. They appear on the printed page in parentheses. Here are a few specific stage directions that should be understood :



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- a. Down stage*, which refers to the front of the stage.
- b. Up stage*, which refers to the back of the stage.
- c. Right stage and left stage*, which refer to these directions as viewed from the back of the stage.

### HOW TO READ A PLAY

Following are suggestions that will help you to read and to study a play :

1. Guess at the plot from the title.
2. Read through rapidly to get the story ; then read again to answer certain questions in your mind.
3. Determine the kind of play.
4. In one sentence state the theme, or the purpose, that the author had in writing the play.
5. Answer these questions about the background :
  - a.* At what period in history does the action take place?  
How long does the action last?
  - b.* Where are the scenes located : town, country, court, cottage, indoors, out-of-doors?
  - c.* What feeling does the play arouse : pity, sorrow, happiness, scorn?
6. Answer these questions about the action :
  - a.* Tell the story of the plot by relating the series of incidents in the order of their happening.
  - b.* Who is the leading character?
  - c.* What characters or circumstances aid the hero or heroine?
  - d.* Who or what opposes the leading character?
  - e.* At what point does the action begin, grow more exciting, reach the highest interest, close?
7. Answer the following questions :
  - a.* With what situation does the play begin?



## How to Study Drama

b. How are we told what has happened before the play begins?

c. What devices has the writer used to make you feel suspense, or eagerness to read the rest of the play?

d. What causes the action to slow down or to speed up?

e. At what point does the action reach the climax?

f. What hints are given to make you anticipate the incidents before they happen?

8. From what class are the characters chosen: court life, the business world, the peasant folk, soldier ranks?

9. What words seem best to describe the manner in which the play is written?

10. What have you learned about the author from the play?

### HOW TO ACT A PLAY

Here are hints that will help you to stage a play:

1. Select a short play and study it.

2. Shorten the play by cutting it, if it is too long; expand it, if it is too short.

3. Choose a class director.

4. Appoint a stage manager and an assistant stage manager.

5. Select a committee on scenery and properties to assist the stage manager. Staging should be quite simple.

6. Select a committee on costumes. These, too, should be simple.

7. Divide the class into as many groups as there are characters. Assign the lines of one character to each group. Groups should be given a preference in the choice of characters.

8. Let each group choose its chairman.

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9. Let each group meet to discuss the interpretation of its character. Such topics as these will help to secure a profitable discussion :

*a.* The grouping of words and the necessary pauses to aid the audience in understanding the play from hearing it only one time.

*b.* The time and manner of entrances and exits.

*c.* The position of characters on the stage.

*d.* Pantomime, or gestures of the body and expressions of the face, to reveal the thoughts and feelings of the characters.

10. Let each member of each group practice lines and actions at home.

11. Let each member try out a part before his group. The group representative should be chosen by group vote.

12. Let each group coach its representative. During the coaching, various members should read the lines of all other characters.

13. Let group representatives rehearse before the director and the group chairmen, who continue to coach the actors.

14. Let the program committee, consisting of the director and the chairman of each group, announce the date of the play, prepare the programs, and invite the guests.

15. Let the play be given. If any representative is unable to appear, let each group elect a substitute from its members, who will be fully prepared to take the part.

The suggestions given above refer to a play to be presented for the whole school, or for a parents' association, or for any special program that calls for the best effort of the entire class. The production would be a real staging

of the play by the class. For suggestions about presenting plays in the classroom, see the section, *Let's Pretend*.

### HOW TO WRITE A PLAY

Here are a few hints that will help you to write a dramatization of a story, or an original play :

1. Choose a story suitable for dramatization, one that is full of action.
2. Read it in class ; determine the theme, or purpose.
3. Reproduce the story orally, making the conversations as natural as possible. Add dialogue of your own if necessary.
4. Decide upon the characters required to present the unit of action you have chosen.
5. Divide the story into scenes.
6. Find out where each scene is laid.
7. Determine the stage properties required for each scene.
8. Pantomime the action.
9. Choose a new title.
10. Choose a play to use as a model of well-written plays. *The Philosopher of Butterbiggens* furnishes a good model.
11. Write the setting, or stage directions, in parentheses before beginning to write the conversations.
12. Follow the model in writing the names of characters, the placing and underlining of by-play, the proper position of entrance and exit directions.
13. In making your play into booklet or pamphlet form, follow the style of the model chosen.

# NOTES, QUESTIONS, AND TOPICS FOR STUDY

## DANIEL BOONE: PATRIOT

Constance D'Arcy Mackay

*Daniel Boone: Patriot* was written by Constance D'Arcy Mackay, who was born in St. Paul, Minnesota. When but a child she composed plays about fairies, cut characters from cardboard, and paraded them upon a toy stage of her own making. You may imagine, then, how the story of the play-acting of the four sisters in *Little Women*, by Louisa May Alcott, must have fascinated her. After reading of their activities, Miss Mackay was inspired to establish a little theater of her own, the members being herself and her playmates. The plays which they gave were sometimes of her own composing. Later, as a student at Boston University, she learned how to write plays and how to present them. Many plays, masques, pageants, and books on the production of plays, on costuming, and on music are credited to her. Miss Mackay has been active in settlement and community work. This experience taught her just what pleases an audience at a civic or patriotic celebration, and led her to write and direct many pageants to be presented in large cities. She served as Director of the Department of Pageantry and Drama in the War Camp Community Service in 1918.

You will find the following plays written by her very pleasant reading: *The Silver Thread*; *The Sun Goddess*;

## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

*Troll Magic; Siegfried; Benjamin Franklin, Journeyman; The Foam Maiden.*

### **The Play**

*Daniel Boone: Patriot* is an historical play; that is, it is a dramatization of an actual incident of history. It was written to be presented at a celebration on July 4, 1911, by a group of boys. Most of you know the story of Daniel Boone, the pathfinder of Kentucky, who answered the call of the wild and responded to the lure of the forest. He was an Indian fighter, a crafty backwoodsman, and a surveyor. He is remembered as an explorer who opened the way for white settlers to the West, and who built forts, Boonesborough and Logan's Fort, to protect the settlers. He led the defense against the Indians and thus protected the pioneers so that they settled permanently south of the Ohio and along the Mississippi. Had these forts not been defended, Indians in overwhelming numbers would have taken Kentucky, and the United States would have lost this region. The success of George Rogers Clark and of Boone overawed the Indians, and Kentucky was never again in real danger.

Following is the story on which the play is based. While George Rogers Clark was conquering the Northwest, Indians were causing trouble south of the Ohio. About 1775, Boonesborough and Logan's Fort were assailed by Indians. Many lives were lost in withstanding the attack. In 1778 Kentucky was again invaded, this time by a large army of Indians and French Canadians under the command of Captain Duquesne (dü'kän'). Boone, with thirty companions, was engaged in making salt at the

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Lower Blue Licks in February of that year, when he was surprised by about two hundred Indians. Boone and his party surrendered. The captives were carried to Detroit and delivered to the commander, all except Boone, who was adopted by the Indians. He overheard their discussion of a proposed attack against Boonesborough, and after some time effected his escape and reported the plan. Early in September the expedition took place. Captain Duquesne, with about four hundred Indians and forty French Canadians, besieged Boonesborough for about nine days, but he was finally defeated. More than thirty men were killed and many more were injured during this attack. All troubles with the Indians ceased after 1783, when peace was made with Great Britain. The story of the play differs in some respects from the true story of the incidents.

The character of Daniel Boone is the chief interest in the play. Note how his wisdom and shrewdness are shown in his dealings with the Indians. He shows initiative, self-reliance, and boldness, quickness of resource, sympathy with his followers and even with his enemies. We feel from the very beginning of the struggle that he will defeat the Indians, single-handed. His seeming surrender does not deceive us; we have confidence in his far-sightedness. Note the contrast of the peaceful opening situation with later scenes after the seizure of Boone. The characters of all the pioneers are well drawn. The picture of the Indians is accurate and pleasing.

You will enjoy reading *Daniel Boone: Wilderness Scout* by Stewart Edward White.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Edited by Helen E. Hawkins, and published by Allyn and Bacon.



DANIEL BOONE





# Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

## Questions and Topics for Study

1. Why are Daniel Boone and his companions camping in the woods?
2. What impression of James Colby do you get from his first speech?
3. Describe the situation at the beginning of the play.
4. What impression of Boone do you get from his first speech?
5. Find an incident that proves Boone to be an expert backwoodsman.
6. Find an incident that shows his bravery.
7. With what incident does the play really begin?
8. What two forces are struggling in this play?
9. What purpose is served by the opening conversation between Boone and his companions?
10. What appeal does Boone make to his followers in case they are attacked?
11. Describe clearly just how you would have the Indians appear in the background, if you were directing a performance of the play.
12. What in your opinion is the first feeling of the pioneers when they see that Boone has surrendered?
13. State the terms offered by the Indians to Boone.
14. Why does Boone surrender to the Indians?
15. State clearly what plan of escape is in Boone's mind.
16. Why does Boone say these words: "With my kind brothers"?
17. Describe an Indian celebration of victory.
18. How does Boone triumph in the end?

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19. What do you think the Indians do when they discover their mistake?

20. In your opinion will this play be effective on the stage? Why do you think so?

21. Collect pictures of Daniel Boone and of Indians for the bulletin board.

22. Illustrate the following lines by pantomime:

"The line, Indian guarded and led by Hawk Eye, marched out, left."

"Now we make a great feast. Celebrate!"

23. Make a list of topics that will be suitable for interesting class discussions. These might be written on the board, so that everyone will have a chance to see them and to choose the one on which he wishes to report.

### Costumes

*The White Men.* Daniel Boone and his followers wear suits of buckskin such as Indians wore. (Cotton khaki resembles the tan color of the buckskin.) The suit consists of long breeches and a fringed buckskin tunic coming about to the knee. There is no adornment on the tunics, such as Indians wear. The lads of the party wear buckskin breeches of knee length, and tan strapping over tan-colored stockings. They should all wear moccasins, or imitation moccasins made of khaki, and embroidered in beads.

*The Indians.* The Indians wear suits resembling those of Boone and his followers, except that they are decorated with painted designs and bead and shell embroidery. Black Fish has a great black fish painted on his khaki

## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

costume. All wear moccasins. All have feathered head-dresses and war-paint. The war-paint of Black Fish is scarlet and black, and he wears an immense black head-dress of feathers that is longer and handsomer than the head-dresses of the others. Eagle's Feather wears a scarlet head-band and one huge gray eagle's feather in it, stuck upright.

*Properties.* The hollow tree can be made of two halves of barrels fastened together, and placed upright by means of props put behind it. It should be painted dark brown inside and out, or covered with dark-brown burlap flecked with black and white for lichen. Green vines can be hung about it, and it should stand well in the background, resembling a rotting and blasted tree as much as possible.

### THE PHILOSOPHER OF BUTTERBIGGENS

Howard Chapin

Howard Chapin was born in America in 1886, but he lived in England so long that he finally adopted that country as his own. He fought as an English soldier in the late war, and died for England on the battlefield of Loos in 1915. Mr. Chapin wrote many plays, most of them comedies. From the time of his first school days he was connected in some way with the stage. At the age of seven years he acted the part of a little boy in one of Shakespeare's plays given in the Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon. Later he was the producer of plays in Glasgow. Just before the war he was a stage manager for Granville Barker, a producer of plays, in London. The play, *The Philosopher of Butterbiggens*, was given at a

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memorial performance for Howard Chapin in London. His own small son took the part of Alexander.

### **The Play**

*The Philosopher of Butterbiggens* is a well made comedy. As soon as the curtain goes up, we feel the Scotch atmosphere in the setting and in the characters on the stage. We can see, by the "warm light that leaps and flickers," the feeble old grandfather, David Pirnie. We know from the stiffness of his body and from the appeal in his eyes as he looks at his determined daughter, who faces him squarely, that there is a family difference, a conflict that approaches a quarrel. This is a good beginning. It plunges right into the action.

Besides having a good beginning, the play has another excellence in the manner in which it arouses suspense. We feel from the opening speech that we have come face to face with an obstacle that can be overcome only by struggle. We are informed of the nature of the conflict in the first speech of Lizzie. The suspense is kept up by the actions and conversation of the characters.

### **Questions and Topics for Study**

1. Compare the illustration facing page 28 with the description of the stage setting. Are there any details that might be added to the illustration?
2. Why is the beginning of this play a good one?
3. What has happened just before the curtain goes up?
4. Does David's first speech begin or continue a conversation? Why do you think so?

## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

5. What gestures would you have Lizzie use to make her first speech more emphatic?

6. Who is in the right, Lizzie or David? Why do you think so?

7. In your opinion whose side does John take?

8. What conclusion does David reach in regard to the most important thing in life? Read the lines that express his philosophy.

9. What really suggests a plan to David?

10. What incident starts the struggle — the fact that wee Alexander is put to bed without hearing a story, or the fact that he wails after he is put there?

11. What was David's occupation when he was young? His standing?

12. Why did Lizzie change the location of Alexander's bed?

13. What part in the plot does this incident play?

14. Why does Lizzie give in?

15. What have you found out about David Pirnie from this play?

a. Has he a sense of humor? Find a passage that proves this.

b. Why is he called a philosopher?

c. Does he love his daughter? Prove your point.

16. What do you think will happen after the curtain goes down?

17. Is the ending a good one? Why?

18. Imagine that you are David Pirnie. Keep true to his Scotch character and tell a story that he might have told to Alexander when the curtain dropped. Perhaps he told him such stories as you find in old Scotch ballads.

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19. Divide the class into four groups. Assign to each group the lines and actions of one of the characters. Let the individual groups meet to discuss how to interpret the character assigned to it. Let each member practice the lines and "try out" before his group. The best interpreter should be chosen to take the part of that character. Let the winners from each group come together and practice the whole play. Let these group representatives present the play from memory.

20. If you can find suitable pictures, or if you can paint or draw, you might enjoy making a booklet of pictures to illustrate this play. The pictures may be effectively mounted on plain note-book paper. A brief explanation should accompany each picture, and an attractive title should be written beneath each one. A line or phrase from the play might be chosen for the titles. If each member of the class is made responsible for one picture, the project will be speedily completed. The pages should be bound carefully and a suitable cover made.

### ROBIN HOOD IN SHERWOOD

Alfred Noyes

Alfred Noyes is a well-known English poet and dramatist. He believes that beauty and happiness are to be found in much greater abundance than ugliness and sordidness. Legends and folk tales and enchanting stories of long ago fascinate him.

Alfred Noyes was born in Straffordshire, England, 1880, and educated at Exeter College, Oxford University. In 1913 he toured America, delivering at that time a series

## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

of lectures at the Lowell Institute, Boston. In 1914 he accepted the position of Professor of Modern English Literature at Princeton University. His ballads are the best known of his poems. They have earned for him the title of "the singing poet."

You may like to read *The Highwayman*, *Forty Singing Seamen*, *The Barrel-Organ*, *The Flower of Old Japan*.

### **The Story of Robin Hood**

Robin Hood, an old friend to most of you, returns in this play to renew the pleasant companionship of the past. Much has been written about Robin Hood, but very little is really known about him. One thing, however, is certain: he is one of the most popular heroes in literature.

It was in 1066 that the Normans, under the leadership of William the Conqueror, defeated the Saxons, who had inhabited England for many years. Norman noblemen oppressed the Saxons by taking their homes and lands, and by torturing those who did not pledge loyalty to the Norman king. The English, or Saxon, archers were among the best in the world. The Normans passed very severe forest laws, unmercifully punishing any archer who should hunt, even for food. To protect themselves and to supply food for the starving, many archers fled to the forests, where they lived as an outlawed band.

The most famous of the archers was Robin Hood, who lived in Sherwood Forest with his band of outlaws. They robbed every wealthy baron and rich churchman who passed through the forest, but distributed the gains among the poor, whom the Normans had mistreated. A great price was offered by the Sheriff of Nottinghamshire for

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the head of Robin Hood, but Robin was so skilled an archer, and so swift of foot, and so protected by his band that he could not be captured. He became the ideal of goodness and justice among the common people. He was very loyal to his king, Richard I, called the Lion-Hearted. Richard was as adventurous as Robin Hood. Both were brave and generous and gentle.

### **The Story of the Whole Play, *Sherwood***

The play, *Robin Hood in Sherwood*, in this book, is the second act of the five-act drama entitled *Sherwood* written by Alfred Noyes. This brief act is a fanciful romance; that is, it is a play that lets the audience escape for a while from real life and dwell in a land of fancy akin to fairyland. It is written in unrhymed verse. The time of the action is the reign of Richard I, sometimes called the *Black Knight* because he wore black armor. Richard was adventurous, warlike, jolly, open-hearted, and generous to the needy. He liked nothing better than to take part in the crusades, warlike expeditions undertaken by the Christians of western Europe against the Mohammedans for the conquest of the Holy Land, Jerusalem, and the Holy Sepulcher. During King Richard's absence, his brother, Prince John, and their mother, Queen Elinor, tried to take the throne. Prince John was cruel, oppressing the people and torturing them constantly. When the story of *Sherwood* begins, King Richard is expected back from the Holy Land. Here is the complete story:

ACT I. This act explains the situation and starts the action. King John commanded the Sheriff of Nottingham to put out the eyes of a serf, who was caught hunting deer.





KING RICHARD SETTING OUT ON THE THIRD CRUSADE  
(Courtesy of Douglas Fairbanks)



## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

The serf belonged to the band of outlaws. Prince John decided to serve a writ of outlawry upon the Earl of Huntingdon, called Robin Hood, because of his encouragement to the archers. The Earl of Huntingdon's engagement to marry Marian Fitzwalter, called Maid Marian, was being celebrated when Prince John served the writ, and tried to capture Robin Hood, who escaped. Prince John then tried to kidnap Maid Marian, but was not successful. Queen Elinor, pretending to be a friend of Marian's, persuaded Fitzwalter to send Marian to Sherwood Forest, whither Robin Hood had fled and where Marian would be safe.

ACT II. It is at this point that the play included in this book begins. Little John, noted for his great physical strength and skill with the bow, and Much, noted for his small size, were preparing the beds of fern when Robin Hood returned to the forest. Soon Shadow-of-a-Leaf appeared, Maid Marian's fool, who was said to be akin to the fairies. For this reason he could visit the fairies, to whom he reported the dangers of Robin Hood and Marian. No one paid much attention to him because he was supposed to be half-witted. He came before Robin and announced the coming of a page, who was really Maid Marian in disguise. The band of outlaws gathered to welcome Marian, whom they named Maid Marian. Friar Tuck, a jolly member of the band, read the by-laws. As soon as all had retired, Shadow-of-a-Leaf reported to the King and Queen of Fairyland. He begged them to protect the two in Sherwood. They offered to do so if Shadow-of-a-Leaf would break his fairy vows. This would mean death to the little fool. He would never again be

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able to enter Fairyland. He decided to wait until King Richard returned. The act closes with the song by the fairies, telling that the gates of Fairyland opened whenever a mortal rendered service to the poor and needy.

ACT III. The townsfolk assembled to see the execution of Will Scarlet, whom the Sheriff of Nottingham had caught hunting deer. Robin appeared just in time to save Will Scarlet, to whom he was related. A black knight arrived on a black charger. Robin Hood seized the horse and made his escape to Sherwood. He found Prince John there trying once again to capture Maid Marian. Prince John was about to stab Robin Hood when the Black Knight came and bade John begone. The Black Knight was King Richard. The king gave Robin Hood's lands back to him, and let him marry Maid Marian.

ACT IV. King Richard went on another crusade. Prince John trapped Robin Hood, and again tried to take Maid Marian. Shadow-of-a-Leaf climbed to Robin Hood's cell and helped him to escape. Robin Hood and Maid Marian went again to live in Sherwood. Word was received that King Richard was dead. Prince John became king.

ACT V. Robin Hood was wounded and taken to a priory, or abbey, for treatment. Queen Elinor disguised herself as a nun and offered to cure him. She shot Maid Marian. Robin Hood then shot himself. Shadow-of-a-Leaf broke his fairy vows in order that the two might forever dwell in the forest with the fairies. The gates of Fairyland opened to admit Robin Hood and Maid Marian.

# Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

## Questions and Topics for Study

1. What effect does the opening song by Little John have upon the audience?
2. First speeches of characters usually explain to the audience the situation, or tell what is going to happen. For what do the first speeches in this play prepare you?
3. Whom does Robin Hood mean by *they* when he says, "They're on the watch"?
4. List the things that Robin Hood did the night before this play begins.
5. Read aloud the speech in which Robin tells why he shot a grey goose feather through Lady Marian's casement.
6. What evidence do you find of Shadow-of-a-Leaf's trustworthiness as a servant?
7. Just how should Robin Hood act when he discovers that the page is Marian?
8. Describe just how Lady Marian looks when she first appears upon the stage. How would you have her act?
9. From his first speech, what do you know about Friar Tuck?
10. List the rules of the outlaws as stated by Friar Tuck.
11. How do Robin Hood and his band plan to fool the sheriff?
12. Why is Widow Scarlet introduced into the story?
13. How does Robin Hood do good in Sherwood?
14. What articles would you need to collect if you were presenting this play?
15. How should Oberon act when he addresses the fairy council?
16. What would you have the fairies do as he speaks to

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them? How has the author helped you to determine their actions?

17. How does Shadow-of-a-Leaf differ from the other fairies?

18. What vow may not be broken by a fairy upon pain of death?

19. Explain what death means to a fairy.

20. How does Oberon expect that Robin Hood may be saved from Prince John?

21. According to the fairies, why does not King Richard come from beyond the seas to help Robin Hood?

22. Who is Blondel?

23. Why is Blondel's song very effective just at the time he sings it?

24. How may Shadow-of-a-Leaf help Robin Hood so that he would be forever safe? Why does he not do it?

25. At what time of day does the play end?

26. What effect has this time upon the audience?

27. At the conclusion of this play, what do you expect to happen next?

28. Explain the warning hinted at in the closing song of the fairies.

29. Do you think that this play would appeal to a motion picture audience?

30. Select your favorite passage and prepare to read it to the class.

31. Cite lines proving that Robin was a champion of the common people.

32. Prepare to present this act in a series of tableaux or of pantomimes. Choose a reader, or a story teller, to read

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the story. Choose suitable music to be played during the scene.

33. Write a notice for a bulletin board advertising the play. Have an exhibition of these notices in class. Decide which one would draw the largest crowd to the theater.

34. Make a class booklet of illustrations for the play, of either original drawings or pictures which the class collects.

35. Perhaps you would enjoy dramatizing one of the Robin Hood ballads.

### TOLD IN A CHINESE GARDEN

Constance Wilcox

Constance Wilcox is the author of a volume of plays called *Told in a Chinese Garden and Other Plays*. At her summer home in Madison, Connecticut, she has directed outdoor performances of her plays. The contents of the volume are: *Pan Pipes*, *Four of a Kind*, *The Princess in the Fairy Tale*, and *Mother Goose Garden*. These were written especially for the out-of-doors, but they may be given effectively indoors. Constance Wilcox was married in 1926 to the Italian nobleman, Count Piguatelli.

#### The Play

*Told in a Chinese Garden* is a comedy. It may also be called a play of local color. As soon as the curtain goes up, the audience is transported to China, where it witnesses a love story in a Chinese garden between Chinese characters.



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The characters are varied. There is the unworthy Wang-Chu-Mo, who owns the garden and is the father of Li-Ti. There is the old, ugly, and dishonorable suitor, Poa-Ting-Fang, who has been chosen by the greedy father for his daughter's husband. There is the lovely and lovable little Chinese lady, Li-Ti, who is the cause of all



I saw the ring . . . and I stole it. . . . Here it is.

the strife. There is the handsome gardener, who knows the fairy lore of the flowers, who loves Li-Ti, and who really owns the property claimed by his wicked uncle. It is like a fairy tale of the disguised prince who makes himself known just in time to save the princess. The governesses and the guards offer further variety of interest.

The loss of the emerald ring is a very important incident



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in the plot because it brings about the accusation of the gardener, which in its turn brings about the face-to-face meeting of the uncle and nephew. Thus the revelation of the nephew in the person of the gardener, the downfall of the uncle, and the betrothal of the young lovers come about naturally.

The conflict is well developed. The action is fairly lively. The color effects make a spectacular stage picture. The truth of the story that the author wishes you to get is that one reaps what he sows. Poa sowed only evil things of life. We are glad that he is paid in his own coin. Tai and Li-Ti sow goodness and gentleness and beauty, and we are glad that they are rewarded with the good and lovely things of life. But don't take the play seriously. Enjoy the story. Enjoy the setting, the color combinations, and the exaggerated forms of courtesy. The Chinese code of politeness is very elaborate. A guest addresses a host in flowery terms of courtesy. He is equally fluent in speaking slightly of himself, in such phrases as "I, the insignificant one, the contemptible guest." He prostrates himself three times before his host, making his head almost touch the ground in humility. Be sure to catch this oriental flavor of the play.

### Questions and Topics for Study

1. How would you represent the garden on the stage to leave no doubt in the minds of the audience that it is a Chinese garden?
2. Judging from the song the gardener is singing as the curtain goes up, do you think the play will be a comedy or tragedy?

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3. Tell just how Poa-Ting-Fang and Wang-Chu-Mo should enter the garden.

4. Describe the state of affairs as revealed in the opening conversation between Wang and Poa.

5. What does the jotting down of the items of the dowry show about the character of Poa?

6. What are the five weaknesses of a lady as stated by Lang?

7. How has it happened that Li-Ti and Poa have never caught a glimpse of each other?

8. With what character are your sympathies enlisted from the start? Why?

9. What is the purpose of instructing Li-Ti in the history of the flowers?

10. State the difference between the history that the governesses taught Li-Ti and the lore that the gardener told her.

11. At what point are you first convinced that the gardener is the son of Poa's brother?

12. Why is the loss of the emerald so serious?

13. At what moment in the play are you convinced that Tai will win?

14. Tell exactly how Tai is saved at court.

15. What is there humorous in Poa's exit?

16. Just what is the nature of the struggle in this play?

17. Suggest three terms of courtesy, other than those found in the play, which might be used in Chinese conversation.

18. Do you like the ending? Give reasons for your answer.

19. From your reading about China, how, besides learn-

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ing descriptions of flowers, do you think Li-Ti might have spent her time? Would she sew? Read? Play games? How would Tai use his time?

20. In your opinion was this play written to tell a story, to portray Chinese manners, or to present characters?

21. Draw a plan for the stage setting. Perhaps you might rather construct this setting on a sand table or on a stage made of cardboard. If you make a miniature stage of cardboard, cut out trees and other properties from paper and color them. Either cut the characters from paper and dress them in paper dresses, or buy tiny Chinese dolls and dress them. Arrange the stage for the latter part of the play in which all, or most, of the characters are present. Select the lines of the play that explain the scene you have represented.

22. Choose one of the flower fables that the governesses teach to Li-Ti. Use this as a model in writing the history of your favorite flower. Perhaps you may try to write a poetic fable, using one of Tai's fables as a model.

23. List the various ways by which the Chinese practice courtesy.

24. Perhaps you would like to have a Chinese exhibition and a tea. You probably have friends who have visited China, or who have collected beautiful trinkets and articles that have come from China. Give a Chinese atmosphere to your classroom. Invite your mothers, or the members of another class, to enjoy your curiosities with you.

a. Your geography will suggest interesting subjects about China. Present these briefly to your audience. Suggested topics: costumes, the Great Wall, Chinese writing.

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b. Serve Chinese tea in China cups. Let the waitresses be dressed in bright Chinese costumes.

c. One scene of *Told in a Chinese Garden* might be presented. Or effective tableaux might be prepared and presented in a series, as a member of the class tells the story of the play.

### **For Outdoor Production**

Any garden could be used for this play.

To make it appear Chinese, large flat gray silhouettes, cut to represent the stone lanterns and pagoda ornaments so often seen in Chinese gardens could be easily made, and placed about.

It is pretty to have a little walk or vista down which the processions can come on entering the garden. The bright-colored costumes are very effective against the green.

For amateur production, Chinese costumes and properties are easy to find, and the coolie costumes can be very effective with soft colored smocks and peaked straw hats.

### **For Indoor Production**

A simple scene would be —

A white wall extends across the back of the stage, with a little red door let in on one side, through which the characters enter the garden. The top of the wall is colored with a band of scarlet, blue, and gold tiles, and perhaps the curving scarlet tip of a Chinese roof shows over the top of the wall against the vivid blue sky. The grass in the garden is very bright green, with a little pebble path running through it, and prim flower beds against the wall, and in the foreground, brilliant, stiff flowers. On either side, stunted, Chinese pines, in lacquered pots. For

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ornament, two red lacquered sitting Chinese dogs guarding the door in the wall.

### **SPREADING THE NEWS**

#### **Lady Gregory**

Lady Gregory, as her name indicates, belongs to a titled family, one of the oldest in Ireland. She loves her country and her people. In her plays, Ireland and the Irish people furnish the chief interest. Most of the scenes are laid in Cloon, a seaside village.

William Butler Yeats started what is known as the Irish theater movement. Lady Gregory has worked unceasingly with this playwright for the success of this movement at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin. The purpose of this theater movement in Ireland is to present to the world the legends, the folklore, the songs, and the wit and humor of the Irish people. Soon the enthusiasm of these playwrights enlisted many other artists in the cause, among whom was Lord Dunsany. Lady Gregory is the author of many plays and romantic legends, all of which show her mastery of artistic beauty; but she is most successful when writing the short racy comedies for which she is best known.

#### **The Play**

Have you ever played the game called "Gossip"? The players are divided into two groups, with a leader for each group. The leaders confer, to decide what shall be the bit of gossip, or story, to be circulated. One takes his place at the head of one row and the other places himself at the head of the second row. Each leader whispers the story to the

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person sitting next to him, who in turn whispers what he hears, or what he thinks he hears, to the next person, and thus the whispering continues to the end of the rows. No one is permitted to repeat. Finally, the two end players tell the message as it was whispered to them, after which the leaders make known to the merry-makers the original story, which has usually been twisted beyond recognition during its circulation. The prize goes to the side that tells the more accurate story in the end. *Spreading the News*, by Lady Gregory, reminds one of this old game.

*Spreading the News* has given pleasure to many people because the subject is one of general interest. The author takes a common weakness in human nature and exaggerates it in this story. Who has not heard of a rumor that became twisted with repetition, often harming an innocent person as it travels? Lady Gregory portrays another human trait — the love of excitement and the eagerness to break monotony by having something happen.

The introduction to the play is rather long. It presents an Irish village on market day and introduces the main characters, who are representative of the peasant class. Market day offers an opportunity to present a variety of characters. The plot is built around a very simple incident, the misinterpretation of a statement that spreads rapidly. To the statement made by Mrs. Fallon as to the whereabouts of her husband and the misinterpretation of this by Mrs. Tarpey, who is deaf, the neighbors and bystanders add bit by bit until they have spun this twisted story: Bartley Fallon pursued red-haired Jack Smith with a hayfork, killed him, and was to sail that night for America in the company of Kitty Keary, Jack Smith's wife.

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The gossip is so convincing that even Bartley's wife is finally persuaded to believe it. The news stops spreading only with the appearance of Jack Smith himself on the scene. To make the situation more complicated, the magistrate in his stupidity refuses to believe that the new-comer is Jack Smith, but insists that he must be a false impersonator brought to save Bartley; so he takes both Jack Smith and Bartley Fallon to jail, each vowing vengeance on the other.

The play is full of action. The dialogue is spicy with racy wit and fun. The situations are amusing and complicated. The characters are varied and true to the Irish peasant type. All these facts make us conclude that the play is a good one. Underneath the story with its rollicking humor there is a truth which the author wishes us to get: "Much harm is done through idle talk." Her chief purpose in writing the play, however, was not to impress this truth, but to set forth certain traits of character common to the people of her own country: their wit, their vivid imagination, their superstition, their raciness of speech, and their joy of living. She portrays traits common to all people and also those especially peculiar to her countrymen.

In the following note, Lady Gregory tells how she happened to write this play, and how nearly she came to making a tragedy of it:

"The idea of this play first came to me as a tragedy. I kept seeing as in a picture people sitting by the roadside, and a girl passing to the market, gay and fearless. And then I saw her passing by the same place at evening, her head hanging, the heads of others turned from her, because of some sudden story



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that had risen out of a chance word, and had snatched away her good name.

"But comedy and not tragedy was wanted at our theatre to put beside the high poetic work, *The King's Threshold*, *The Shadowy Waters*, *On Baile's Strand*, *The Well of the Saints*; and I let laughter have its way with the little play. I was delayed in beginning it for a while, because I could think of Bartley Fallon only as dull-witted or silly or ignorant, and the handcuffs seemed too harsh a punishment. But one day by the sea at Duras a melancholy man who was telling me of the crosses he had gone through at home said — "But I'm thinking if I went to America, it's long ago to-day I'd be dead. And it's a great expense for a poor man to be buried in America." Bartley was born at that moment, and, far from harshness, I felt I was providing him with a happy old age in giving him the lasting glory of that great and crowning day of misfortune."

### Questions and Topics for Study

1. Why do you think the title an appropriate one?
2. How does Mrs. Tarpey's deafness aid in the development of the plot?
3. Trace the news from the time it begins until it ceases to spread.
4. At what point is interest highest?
5. For what reason is the song of Jack Smith introduced?
6. At what two points in the play does this song move the action forward?
7. What kind of woman is Mrs. Fallon?
8. What effect does her belief in her husband's guilt have?
9. By what means do you learn of the supposed murder of Jack Smith?



## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

10. What part do the "spilled" apples have in the play?

11. Why does the author make Bartley in his first speeches tell repeatedly of his bad luck?

12. In your opinion is any part of the story exaggerated so much that it seems unreal? Explain.

13. How does Bartley aid in his own arrest upon his return?

14. What effect has the appearance of Jack Smith; that is, is the plot untangled or made more complicated by his appearance? Why?

15. Name three adjectives that describe the people of Cloon.

16. Who is the hero? Explain.

17. In your opinion, what is the value of circumstantial evidence?

18. Write a short paragraph on the ways by which Lady Gregory secures humor in this play.

19. Prepare an oral composition on the characteristics of the people in the play, quoting lines from the play to prove your points.

20. Try to tell the story in as few words as possible.

21. Perhaps you may like to play the game of gossip by letting a leader whisper a story to a classmate, who in turn whispers what he hears to another, and so on to the end of the line. The end player should tell what he hears from the last whisperer, after which the leader should tell what it was that he whispered to the first player.

22. You might find it interesting to try to write a short one-act play based upon a false rumor.

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### THE FARCE OF THE WORTHY MASTER PIERRE PATELIN

The authorship of the play, *The Farce of Master Pierre Patelin*, has remained unknown to this day. It was first acted in 1469. It is the only play included in the book that is not a modern play. *The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife* has its setting in the Middle Ages, but it was written in the present time: The quaintness of the setting, the mediaeval costumes, and the broad humor of the situations in both plays make us better acquainted with the period of the Middle Ages.

*Master Pierre Patelin* is a farce. You have already learned that a farce is a comedy that exaggerates both situations and characters to such a degree that the play is ridiculous and undignified. You should not try to find a serious meaning in a farce, for there is none in it. The chief purpose of the writer seems to be to furnish a merry entertainment for the audience at the expense of some character, or some phase of government, or of life, which appears ridiculous to him. The situations are important in a farce. Give yourself up to the enjoyment of this play much as you do to the foolishness of the tricks of a clown at a circus.

*Master Pierre Patelin* exaggerates characters just as a curved mirror does, which makes a person look too tall or too short, too fat or too thin. Patelin's gulling of the foolish draper, and his being so cleverly tricked by his own trick in the end, is farce raised to the highest degree of perfection. The absurd complications with the draper, the blundering cleverness of the stupid shepherd, the unscrupulous craftiness of Patelin, who laughs with us at his own defeat, make excellent broad humor. This play is

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not unlike a Punch and Judy performance. Patelin has the same foolish joy and pride in his own foolishness that our old friend Punch has. Like Punch he is always in a good humor, even when he gets the worst of things. He is just a likable cheat, who works much more laboriously at being a fraud than he would have to do at being an honest man. The author directs a keen satire at lawyers and at law courts in the play.

The play is divided into two parts. The first part tells about Patelin's duping the draper. The second part gives an account of how Patelin is gulled by a trick of his own planning. The conflict is entirely ridiculous and the motives are undignified.

### Questions and Topics for Study

#### *Scene I*

1. From the description of the characters what kind of play do you expect to see?
2. In what mood is Guillemette? What is the opening situation?
3. Why is Patelin in bed in this first scene? Why do you think such a clever lawyer is without clients?
4. What do you anticipate when Patelin says he is going to market?
5. What has led you to suspect this?
6. Upon what characteristic of Joceaulme is Patelin relying for success?
7. For what offense does Patelin forgive his wife?
8. What characteristics of Patelin have been brought out in this scene?

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9. When this scene ends, to what has it made you look forward?

### *Scene II*

1. How does scene i prepare for this scene?
2. How would you stage this scene?
3. What devices does Patelin use to gull the draper?
4. Explain these sayings:
  - a. "We, among the learned, called him the weather-cock."
  - b. "The apple has fallen nigh the tree."

5. Just what makes the draper urge Patelin to take the cloth?

6. What makes the situation in this scene so humorous?

### *Scene III*

1. What connection is there between scene ii and scene iii?

2. How much time has elapsed since scene i?

3. Which is the funniest speech in this scene? Why do you think so?

4. Why does the author postpone the visit of the draper long enough to let Patelin talk to his wife?

5. What effect has Guillemette's report of her husband's illness upon the draper? Just how would he show surprise?

6. Are any incidents in this scene overdone? Explain.

7. What is there humorous in the continual reference to the spit?

8. How would you have the draper leave the stage?

9. How would you have the draper re-enter a little later?

## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

10. How would you have the draper leave the second time?
11. How has the author secured humor in this scene?
12. Might the play have ended here? Explain.

### *Scene IV*

1. At what point has the shepherd been mentioned before this scene?
2. Just what is the state of mind of the draper?
3. What is the connection between scenes iii and iv?
4. Why is Patelin a good lawyer to undertake the shepherd's case?
5. Find out what the shepherd's name means.
6. Does the whole truth from the shepherd discourage Patelin from attempting the case? Why does he think he can win?
7. Do you doubt at any time that Patelin will win? Why?
8. What are the conditions set up by Patelin?
9. Describe carefully the stage setting for the court scene.
10. How would you have Patelin address the judge?
11. What is humorous in the judge's remedy for the toothache?
12. What in your opinion really wins the case for the shepherd?
13. What is the humor in the situation in which the shepherd thanks his lawyer?
14. What is the most humorous situation in this scene? Give your reasons for your choice.

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15. What is the effect of Patelin's good humor when he is defeated?

16. What qualities of a good lawyer does Patelin possess?

17. Describe Pierre's attitude toward his profession; the draper's attitude toward his.

18. Choose the scene that seems to you the most lively. Give your reasons for your choice. Tell just what each character should do if the scene were given in pantomime.

19. Pick out ten lines suitable for illustration. Perhaps someone will illustrate the lines selected by the class as the ten best lines for this purpose.

20. Draw a setting of the stage, locating the three back openings, the entrance to Patelin's chamber, the entrance to the draper's shop. Place a seat where the judge will sit. Explain how this one setting will serve for the whole play action.

21. Plan to carry out very carefully the directions for the court scene. Read and act this incident.

22. Posters to illustrate this play should be full of color. Perhaps someone will make these.

### *General Questions*

1. There is a bit of keen satire in this play. Explain it. Cite passages from the play to prove what you say.

2. At what weakness in human nature does the dramatist poke fun in the character of the draper?

3. List the devices used by the author to secure humor in this play. Find illustrations of these.

4. Which of the two parts of the play is the more interesting? Why do you think so?

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5. What dramatic effect would have been lost had the play ended with scene iii?
6. Compare the humor of this play with that in *The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife*.
7. Why does the author have the shepherd remain in the last scene?
8. What is the funniest situation in the whole play? Explain.
9. What is the humor in Patelin's lines: "If I could find a bailiff, I'd have you jailed"?

### ALICE IN WONDERLAND

Lewis Carroll

There really never was a Lewis Carroll. *Lewis Carroll* was the pen-name for Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, a distinguished mathematician, a professor at Oxford, and a clergyman. None of his associates knew for a long time that he wrote *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*. He had hosts of friends among the children of his acquaintances, but he was rather shy with grown-ups. One of his favorite comrades was little Alice Liddell of London. One day as he was rowing Alice and her older sister on the river Thames, little Alice begged for a story. The boat was fastened to the bank, and the story of *Alice in Wonderland* was begun. Dorothy and Alice coaxed for more and more; so the story grew at different times until it reached book length. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson wrote many delightful letters to his little friends. You will find these letters in the library. He lived from 1832 to 1898.

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### Alice Gerstenberg

Alice Gerstenberg is a Chicago playwright and novelist. She was educated at the Kirkland Private School in Chicago, and at Bryn Mawr College. *Overtones* by Miss Gerstenberg is considered one of the most famous American plays. You would find *The Pot Boiler* amusing. Alice Gerstenberg has been associated with the various Little Theater experiments in Chicago, and is connected with many dramatic clubs and societies. She was the director and co-founder of the Chicago Junior League for Children.

### The Play

Long ago you probably read about the dream of Alice in Wonderland. Lewis Carroll wrote this story for those who have imagination. Most of us will always like a fairy tale. Most of us will like to reread the story of Alice in Wonderland as we grow older. It is such a pleasant dream of childhood, spent in the pleasant country of dreamland, where one meets many new and strange characters. And Alice is a delightful traveling companion.

There is really no conflict to look for in the play. It is just a dramatization of a story that has fascinated readers with its incident after incident of childish fancy. Give yourself up to the enjoyment of the tale; and as picture after picture of the strange world beyond the looking-glass is presented, you will find yourself growing younger and younger. You may hear yourself "chortling," which Lewis Carroll tells us is a combination of a chuckle and a snort. You will find the same enjoyment as does Alice as you wander with her through the looking-glass, where you





*John Tenniel*

“ Off with her head ! ”



## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

find everything reversed, even time itself. And finally you will discover with Alice that many of the characters are only cards, and that you, too, have been dreaming.

### Questions and Topics for Study

#### *Act I, Scene I*

1. What is the first thing you learn about Alice that makes her trip to Wonderland possible?
2. Why is *Alice in Wonderland* a better title than *Alice in Dreamland*?
3. What hints are given in this scene of the events that follow?

#### *Scene II*

1. Why do you think Alice met the Red Queen and the White Queen almost as soon as she got beyond the looking glass?
2. What characteristic of a child is revealed in the nonsense poem, *Jabberwocky*?
3. What is humorous about the way in which the White Queen's memory works?
4. What is the author's purpose in having everything about the White Queen's dress crooked? In having her prick her finger?
5. Compare the characters of the Red Queen and the White Queen.
6. Summarize the adventures of Alice with the two queens.

#### *Scene III*

1. Describe the setting for scene iii.
2. In what way does scene iii depend upon scene ii?

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3. What prevents Alice from shrinking to nothing at the beginning of this scene?
4. What part does the White Rabbit play?
5. What is the meaning of the name of Humpty Dumpty?
6. What is the chief characteristic of Humpty Dumpty? Read a line that brings out this trait.
7. Describe clearly the feeling that Alice experienced just after the disappearance of Humpty Dumpty. Is this a natural experience in sleep?

### *Scene IV*

1. What is a gryphon?
2. Describe the setting for this scene.
3. Explain the difference between a turtle and a tortoise.
4. Why does the author refer so often to school experiences?
5. Explain the author's use of: reeling and writhing; ambition, distraction, uglification, derision, seaography.
6. Describe the lobster quadrille.
7. How would you represent the Gryphon and the Mock Turtle on the stage?
8. Everything is topsy-turvy in this story. The songs and jingles are only twisted versions of Mother Goose rhymes and children's poems that most of us know very well. What is the song that the Hatter was trying to sing (page 180)?
9. What is the meaning of the word *whiting* as given by the Gryphon?

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10. What familiar poem does the Mock Turtle try to quote?

11. How is Alice conducted to the March Hare's garden?

### *Act II*

1. Describe the March Hare's garden as you would represent it on the stage.

2. Point out the most humorous experiences that Alice has with the March Hare, the Hatter, and the Dormouse.

3. What is a dormouse?

4. What is a hatter?

5. Why would a child like the interruptions?

6. Relate Alice's adventures with the Duchess; the Cat; the King and Queen of Hearts; Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

7. How is the game of croquet played?

8. How does Alice disappear from this scene?

### *Act III, Scene I*

1. Does act ii connect with this scene in any way? How?

2. Tell how you would represent the three gardeners on the stage.

3. How might the Two-Spot, the Five-Spot, and the Seven-Spot be represented?

4. What rule for speaking does the Red Queen give to Alice?

5. Why does the author again include foolish problems in arithmetic?

6. What story does the Red Queen have in mind?

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### *Scene II*

1. What connection is there between scenes i and ii in this act?
2. Draw a setting for this court scene.
3. Describe the proceedings of the court.

### *Scene III*

1. What is the effect of this repetition of the first scene of act i?
2. Does the final ending of the play satisfy you?

### *General*

1. What adventure do you think interested Alice most? Why do you think so?
2. What would have interested you most?
3. Show in what ways this play is based upon the interests of childhood.
4. Prepare to tell the most interesting experience of Alice to the class. Imagine that you are Alice and tell the incident. Imagine that you are one of the other characters and tell the incident.
5. Collect all the songs and poems in the play and find the originals of these twisted versions. For instance, Langford's

"Speak gently, it is better far  
To rule by love than fear"

is the original of the upside-down version: "Speak roughly to your little boy."

6. Try to secure from the library copies of the original illustrations of this story as drawn by John Tenniel. Perhaps artists in the class will add to the collection.

# Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

## MANIKIN AND MINIKIN

Alfred Kreymborg

Alfred Kreymborg is one of the most individual and interesting of the school of modern poets. He believes that humor is essential to both art and life. It may interest you to know that at the age of ten years he was a skillful chess player, and later earned his living by playing exhibition games and by teaching others to play.

Alfred Kreymborg was born in New York City in 1883. His education was secured in the public schools and, as he says, in the school of life. Mr. Kreymborg has edited several books of verse, chiefly free-verse. He has written one volume of plays, *Plays for Poem Mimes*, from which *Manikin and Minikin* is taken. Another very popular puppet play in the same collection is *Lima Beans*, which you may like to read. Mr. Kreymborg at present devotes his time to writing and to traveling. He gives recitals of his own poems, plays, and music, as well as lectures on his contemporaries.

### The Play

*Manikin and Minikin* is a light comedy. It is called a puppet play because the character parts are taken by puppets, or marionettes — wooden dolls. If you have read *Pinnocchio*, you know what a puppet is. Puppet shows have been popular for hundreds of years. Not long ago in the excavations of Egypt, puppets were found that were thought to be several thousand years old.

One of the most skillful puppet showmen is Tony Sarg. No one has such a large collection of the wooden dolls as he. He works constantly to make his puppets better.

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Do you know how he happened to make these figures? He was in London. He had his artist's studio in the Old Curiosity Shop that Charles Dickens wrote about. One day a friend of his, who had just written a book on the history of toys, visited him and encouraged him to make puppets. He has won great distinction in this art. Now every year in New York City all "children from six to sixty" look forward to his puppet plays. Perhaps some of you know the *Tony Sarg Marionette Book*.

The author of *Manikin and Minikin* wrote the following letter to the readers of this book in order that they might better understand the play :

"*Manikin and Minikin* was written on a railroad train racing from Chicago to New York not so many years ago. Some readers may wonder how it was possible for a person to write anything as peaceful as this play while flying through space at the rate of forty or fifty miles an hour. But if an author is pursued by an idea, it quickly takes on the elongated legs of a kangaroo, and no matter where he may be or how fast he may travel, it can out-distance any conveyance in Christendom, and force him to do its bidding.

"There are really three characters in this play, although we behold but two of them on the stage. Not the least important of the three is the servant who has dusted off Manikin and Minikin and, in setting them back on the mantlepiece, has carelessly turned them apart. This servant is as powerful as that hidden Fate which turns human beings apart from time to time, and as powerless as that hidden Fate, which cannot prevail against them just so long as it is love for each other which abides in their hearts. Manikin and Minikin have lived in loyalty for a 'hundred and seventy years,' and though the servant has turned them back to back, and they cannot see each other, the very fact



## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

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that they are separated makes them yearn all the more for each other. It is therefore easy for us to assume that the 'meddling busybody' has been defeated, and that Manikin and Minikin, and all other folk like them, will go on loving and longing for each other just as long as they have the breathing hearts to do so."

This play is a comedy because the ending is satisfactory. The two dolls, or the *inanimates* as they call themselves, pledge loyalty to each other in spite of the meddling servant who has turned them back to back. The meaning, or the central thought of the play, is a satire on the fickleness of human beings, or *animates*, who are so changeable that they like one person to-day, but another person to-morrow. Inanimates, however, are loyal to one another forever and ever.

The outstanding feature of the play is a combination of three arts: music, dancing, and literature. This play is a good example of what the author calls rhythmic pantomime. The puppets dance rhythmically as they speak their lines to the accompaniment of music. If the lines are read rhythmically, the music is not a necessity. The lines were written to be read rhythmically. That is why the great number of short lines and the frequent repetitions of words occur.

### Questions and Topics for Study

1. How does the author make known what the servant has done without telling us outright?
2. Why is the word *everlasting* repeated so often?
3. Just how should this speech of Minikin be read?

"Oh, these Yankees! And I see," etc.

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4. What is the effect of the constant interruption of one character by the other?

5. What idea does the author wish us to get from the comparison of inanimates with animates?

6. Why does Minikin pretend to be jealous of the servant?

7. What does the constant ticking of the clock suggest?

8. What is the effect of the chimes of the clock at the close?

9. What devices has the author used to suggest unending or enduring time?

10. What devices does the author use to secure rhythm?

11. Why is the ending a good one?

12. How many characters really take part in this play? Explain.

13. Why not plan to present this play with puppets? Ask your manual training teacher to help you make the puppets. Ask the art instructor to supervise the painting of these. Ask the music teacher to help with the music. Ask the English teacher to help you with the lines. The physical training teacher might help you with the dancing, or rhythmic movements.

14. Why not write and present an original puppet play? *Rip Van Winkle* offers suitable material.

15. Read as supplementary reading *The Three Wishes* by Tony Sarg.

16. Write a summary of the play, *Manikin and Minikin*, in about twenty-five or thirty words.

17. Read again the part that discusses animates and inanimates; then try to put the thought into your own words.

## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

### JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER

Elma Ehrlich Levinger

Elma Ehrlich Levinger is a writer of Bible plays. *Jephthah's Daughter* is her best-known play, winning a prize in a contest conducted by the Drama League of America. Mrs. Levinger was born in Chicago, and educated at the University of Chicago and at Radcliffe, where she studied under Professor George Pierce Baker, writing successful plays while yet a student. *Kid*, a play written at Radcliffe, was presented by the Harvard Dramatic Club, and later by professional actors at the Keith Theater at Boston.

#### The Play

*Jephthah's Daughter* is a tragedy; that is, the leading character loses in the struggle. The play is a dramatization of the story of Jephthah found in the book of *Judges*, chapter xi. Jephthah, like the King in *The Golden Doom*, forgot all save victory, glory, and self-praise. Both seemed to defy God. Jephthah tried to bargain with the Lord just as he would bargain with any merchant. He tried to bribe Him by vowing that he would offer as sacrifice the first thing that ran to meet him upon his return home, if God would let him defeat the children of Ammon. Then he sought to forget the vow after gaining his wish. His daughter preferred death, however, to a life of dishonor.

The introduction to this play is long, because the situation requires a full explanation. The atmosphere of love and happiness must be created before the action really

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begins in order that the contrast may be the greater. This first lovely picture of Sheilah in the setting of joy, festivity, and rejoicing will but make the misery of the later grief, lamentation, and suffering the more effective.

The opening scene is the preparation for the return of Jephthah. The action begins with the return of Jephthah, when Sheilah runs to greet him. The play contains two climaxes. The minor climax is the confession made by Jephthah to his people concerning his vow. The major climax is the decision of Sheilah to give herself to fulfill her father's vow. The action reaches the highest point of suspense when Sheilah refuses to be saved.

Be sure to note the numerous contrasts in the play :

a. The happy frolicking Sheilah, a mere child, with the lamenting Sheilah who seems to have the maturity of a suffering woman.

b. The difference between the social standing of Jephthah and Sheilah before and after the victory.

c. The pride of Jephthah at his return and his later humility.

d. The first scene of joyous festivity and the last scene of deep lamentation, all the greater because of the setting of victory.

The name *Sheilah* means "the one who is demanded." Jephthah had been ill-treated by his brethren because his mother had deserted her own tribe to marry his father. According to the law of the Orientals, no woman was supposed to marry out of her own tribe. According to this same law the betrothal of Nathan and Sheilah was as binding as the marriage vows. Nathan, therefore, had the legal right to claim Sheilah, which would have saved her from being offered in sacrifice. This situation

## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

heightens the suspense. Note how the merciless determination of Elad creates suspense. Note the swiftness of the conclusion. Contrast this with the lengthy introduction.

The following is the plot or story of the play as it is given in the Bible (*Judges*, xi). Note how closely Mrs. Levinger has followed the original story.

“Then the spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto the children of Ammon. And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver the children of Ammon into mine hand, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, it shall be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering. So Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against them; and the Lord delivered them into his hand. And he smote them from Aroer until thou come to Minnith, even twenty cities, and unto Abel-cheramim, with a very great slaughter. So the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.

“And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she was his only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter. And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back. And she said unto him, My father, thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord; do unto me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon. And she said unto her father, Let this thing be

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done for me: let me alone two months, that I may depart and go down upon the mountains, . . . I and my companions. And he said, Go. And he sent her away for two months: and she departed, she and her companions. . . . And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father,



JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

*Millais.*

who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed. . . . And it was a custom in Israel, that the daughters of Israel went yearly to celebrate the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year."

### Questions and Topics for Study

1. Describe the stage setting. Note the illustration for the play (frontispiece).

## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

2. At what point are you convinced that the play is to be treated as a tragedy?

3. Where is Mizpeh?

4. What do you know about Jephthah from the second and third speeches of Dinah and Sheilah?

5. Why was Jephthah regarded as an outcast in Mizpeh before his victory? Account for the change of attitude toward him.

6. What has been made known to us in the introduction?

7. Suggest the appropriate action for the three girls and Sheilah.

8. Why does Sheilah deck herself in her mother's bridal robe?

9. What has led Jephthah to make such a foolish vow?

10. Who is Elad? What counsel does he give to Jephthah?

11. Tell just how Jephthah should act when he sees Sheilah coming from the house to greet him.

12. How should the other characters on the stage act?

13. What is the real sin of Jephthah that he should be punished so?

14. How does his sin compare with that of the King in *The Golden Doom*?

15. What is Jephthah's plan to avoid the keeping of his vow?

16. Why does Elad not consent to this?

17. Why do the people take Elad's word as the law?

18. Why do Elad and Amasa believe that the vow must be fulfilled?

19. What is Nathan's plan to save Sheilah?



# JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER

BYRON

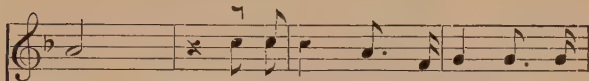
BRAHAM AND NATHAN

*Adagio*

1. Since our country, our God, oh, my  
 2. And of this, oh, my fa - ther ! be  
 3. Though the virgins of Sa - lem la -  
 4. When this blood of thy giv - ing hath



# Jephthah's Daughter



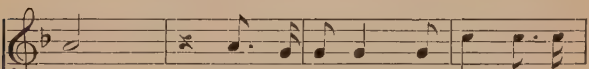
sire !

sure,

ment,

gushed,

De-mand that thy daughter ex -  
That the blood of thy child is as  
Be the judge and the he - ro un -  
When the voice that thou lov - est is



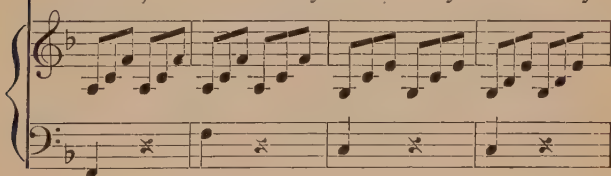
pire ;

pure

bent !

hushed,

Since thy triumph was bought by thy  
As the blessing I beg ere it  
I have won the great bat - tle for  
Let my mem - o - ry still be thy



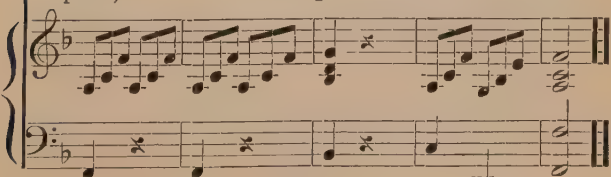
vow,

flow,

thee,

pride,

Strike the bosom that's bared to thee now.  
And the last tho't that soothes me be-low.  
And my fa - ther and country are free.  
And for-get not I smiled as I died.



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20. What is the effect of the suggestions to avoid fulfillment of the vow?

21. Does Elad love his son and granddaughter?

22. How do you feel when you are convinced that there is to be no escape — when Sheilah refuses to be saved?

23. How does Sheilah's act reveal her character?

24. With whom do you sympathize most in *Jephthah's Daughter*? Why?

25. Read the story as it appears in *Judges*, xi. Has the author of this play told all the story? Has she added anything?

26. Read the old Greek myth of Iphigenia, who was offered by her father Agamemnon as a sacrifice to Artemis (Diana). Compare the motive of the sacrifice of Agamemnon with that of Jephthah. (You will find the story of Iphigenia in Bulfinch's *Golden Age of Fable*, in W. S. Landor's *Iphigenia in Hellenics*, or in Herzberg's *Myths and Their Meaning*.)

27. Tell the story of Iphigenia to the class.

### THE GOLDEN DOOM

#### Lord Dunsany

Lord Dunsany is the eighteenth baron of the third oldest family in Ireland. His name is Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett, or Lord Dunsany. He is very proud of his title and of his estates, which cover the most historic land in Ireland. But however interesting the title, the wealth, and the lands, Lord Dunsany, the man, is more interesting. "He is more than a nobleman," says one critic; "he is a gentleman." Lord Dunsany is

## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

six feet and four inches tall. It is said that he is the best pistol shot and the best cricketer in Ireland. He is also one of the best horsemen.

The small town of Tara, famous in legendary song and story, rises near Dunsany Castle. The early childhood of Lord Dunsany was spent on the family estate, which, he says, seemed to him the most beautiful place in the world. The window of his nursery faced the sunset. The dramatist says that the hills and the sunset made a poet of him. The only books that he was permitted to read were the Bible, Grimm's and Andersen's tales, and a Greek mythology. You may have read *The Great Stone Face* written by Hawthorne. If so, you will recall how Ernest loved the great stone face; how he spent hours looking at it; and, finally, how he became like this ideal. He seemed to grow into the fine qualities that he saw in the face, benevolence, kindness, and wisdom. Just so Lord Dunsany seems to have absorbed the beauty of the hills and of the sunset, the Celtic tradition and legend of the great Hill of Tara, the Greek worship of the stars, and the reverence, the joy, the eagerness of eternal childhood. And all these find expression in his plays in a poetic language and rhythm. This beauty and charm of thought and of style of writing make him one of the great poets of to-day.

Lord Dunsany was born in 1878. His education was obtained at Eton and at Sandhurst. He served as lieutenant in the Boer War and as captain of a celebrated regiment in the World War. He first became interested in the literary movement in Ireland in 1902, giving his assistance by writing plays for the Abbey Theatre,

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and by his enthusiastic support. Lord Dunsany visited America in 1919, and pleased great audiences by his reading of his dramas.

You may like to read these plays written by him: *A Night at an Inn*; *The Gods of the Mountain*; *The Prince of Stamboul*. *A Night at an Inn* tells about thieves who stole a great jewel and their punishment by a god with one eye, an eye that looked exactly like the stolen jewel. *The Gods of the Mountain* tells of seven beggars who pretended to be gods; they then got all they wanted, but they were later punished by being turned into images of the very gods they pretended to be. *The Prince of Stamboul* is a story of a little girl who is very ill, but who can be made well if Tommy Tiddler will play "Home, Sweet Home" on his flute. The Prince of Stamboul, a great musician, plays his violin in vain, and then sends his motor for Tommy Tiddler just in time to save the little girl.

### **The Play**

The scene of *The Golden Doom* is in Zericon. You will not be able to find Zericon on any map, because it is to be found only in Dunsany's imagination. Zericon is any land in any country. It is a land ruled by a king, but controlled by the stars.

Long, long ago, men believed that the stars were all-powerful to influence people's lives for good or for evil. Prophets claimed to be able to read the heavens. Kings and men consulted with the prophets to find out what the future had in store for them. The stars were worshiped as if they were gods. To show the stars all honor, they must be consulted (through the prophets) very often.

## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

To neglect to do this caused the stars to be angry. They demanded the highest sacrifice possible before they were appeased.

Lord Dunsany means for us to understand by this play that there is really no difference between a king's crown and a child's hoop. One is of just as much real value as the other. Little things have as much to do with happiness as big things. The crown made the king happy, and the hoop made the boy just as happy. So we learn here that the smallest things overthrow great kingdoms, that prophets are not always free from error, and that gods may speak through little children. This is the theme of the play: little things have as much to do with happiness as big things and little children are frequently wise. Lord Dunsany seems to be vexed with the foolish pride of kings and with kingly pomp and outward form, and the pretended wisdom of prophets. He writes the play to laugh at them, but he writes it chiefly that he may have the fun of writing it and of creating new places and people from out his vast store of imagination and fancy. This play is a fanciful one for this very reason.

There is a large variety of characters offered in the play. The stupid, mechanical sentries, who are so well trained to guard the king's door and to make the ceremonial courtesies to the king, cannot read or write or think. The prophets with all their supposed wisdom are just about as stupid as the guards. Their false interpretation and their foolish outward observances of exaggerated form reveal their stupidity. The king, in his haughtiness and selfishness and pride, is a direct contrast to the children in their unconscious humility and simplicity. Note, too,

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the contrast between the stately and ceremonious entrance of the king with the simple and even unnoticed entrance of the children. It is said that every character in this play represents a type of person met in everyday life. Remember that the chief interest of this play is not the theme, but the delight of a magical story.

### Questions and Topics for Study

1. Why do the sentries talk about the stars and the king in their first speeches? What do they explain to us?
2. Why was it death to touch the king's door?
3. Why do the sentries pay no attention when the children touch the door?
4. Describe just how you think the boy and girl look.
5. Does the poem written by the children seem to have much meaning when you first read it? Why?
6. Why does the first sentry fear the war in the hills?
7. Why does the author have the children interrupt the sentries by talking to each other and by writing on the king's door?
8. What was the effect on the spies of the writing on the door?
9. Why do the sentries not think of the children when they try to recall all the people who have visited the place?
10. Why does the writing so terrify the king?
11. What is the effect on you of the king's terror?
12. What is humorous in the situation?
13. Why do the prophets sometimes wear golden cloaks? Why do they sometimes wear green ones? Why do they sometimes wear black ones?

## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

14. What meaning does the chief prophet of the stars give to the writing?

15. What reason do the sentries give to prove that a god wrote the lines?

16. What is the king's chief fault? Compare him with Jephthah.

17. By what means does the king appease the gods? Compare Jephthah's sacrifice.

18. Why do the spies think the gods have taken the crown?

19. How long ago did the action occur?

20. What story written by Hawthorne tells of a king whose greed for gold led him to make a great sacrifice?

21. What do you consider the most solemn moment in the acting?

22. What little thing overthrew a big thing in this play?

23. What is the message of the play?

24. Do you like this play? Why?

25. For sheer beauty of thought and of expression *The Golden Doom* ranks high among poetic plays. It is full of wonderful color and magic atmosphere. Find a passage that you consider an expression of beautiful thought; one of beautiful language.

26. Present before the class either the sentries-and-children episode of the play or the king-and-prophets episode.

### THE SEVEN GIFTS

Stuart P. Walker

Just as Tony Sarg and Alfred Kreyborg have introduced the marionette or puppet play as a delightful stage spectacle, so has Stuart P. Walker developed the portman-

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teau theater. A portmanteau theater, as its name suggests, can be packed up and folded into a great suitcase and carried from place to place. Because of the ease with which it can be carried, it is the best known and most popular of the Little Theaters in our country.

If you have not read the following portmanteau plays written by Stuart P. Walker, you have real pleasure in store for you: *Six Who Pass While the Lentils Boil* and *Nevertheless*.

Stuart P. Walker was born in Kentucky. He received his education in public schools and at the University of Cincinnati, and finally at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, New York City. For some time he was general director for Belasco, the well-known producer of plays in New York. Later, 1914, he established the Portmanteau Theatre, to which he now devotes his time. You may be interested in knowing that he finished the writing of *Six Who Pass While the Lentils Boil* in a single day. He has made successful dramatizations of Booth Tarkington's *Seventeen* and of the book of *Job*.

### Questions and Topics for Study

1. Which gift would you have preferred had you been the queen? Give the reasons for your choice.
2. Imagine that you are the eighth giver. What gift would you bring?
3. The child's gift is of less practical value than any other gift. In your judgment why does the queen consider it the best Christmas gift?
4. Had you been the child, which gift would you have chosen? Why?





*Reprinted by permission of Stuart Walker*

The Humble Woman says that her bird shall never be caged.



## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

5. What unwise choice in gifts had each of the first six givers made?

6. Why not prepare an original class pantomime of the gifts of the twelve months of the year?

7. Prepare to tell the story of the pantomime of *The Seven Gifts* to a child.

8. Read *Why the Chimes Rang*, by Elizabeth McFadden. Compare the two stories in *Why the Chimes Rang* and *The Seven Gifts*.

### THE MAN WHO MARRIED A DUMB WIFE

Anatole France

Anatole France was a teller of tales. No matter what he wrote, whether novels, sketches, articles, or plays, his style made him a master of story-telling. His imagination was most active. Have you read *Little Pierre*, a book about his childhood? This passage well illustrates his imaginative talent:

"I put my eye to the opening [a hole in the wall paper] and beheld living shadows that made my hair stand on end. I then applied my ear to the spot and heard an uncanny murmur, what time an icy breath passed along my cheek, all of which confirmed me in the belief that behind wall paper existed another and an unknown world."

*Anatole France* was the pen name of Jacques Anatole Thibault. He was elected to membership in the French Academy, the greatest honor that can be bestowed on a French artist. He was born in 1844; he died in October, 1924.

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### The Play

*The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife* is a farce; that is, it is a comedy in which the incidents and situations are ridiculous and of more importance than the characters, who are more like puppets than like human beings. The purpose of a farce is to exaggerate situations in order to make the audience laugh uproariously. The chief character may lose or win in the end — it matters little which. The characters in this type of play are always moved by undignified and trivial motives, which fact adds to the ridiculousness of the whole.

You will have to admit that *The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife* is an entertaining play. It is regarded as one of the best short comic dramas in any language. There is little doubt that it will continue to amuse people, because it presents humorous situations that have always furnished amusement. From the beginning of civilization people have had troubles with servants; people have talked about the high cost of living; doctors have used big words for little ailments; ladies have chattered too much; fashions have changed; gentlemen have pretended to "be driven crazy" by the talkativeness of women. The author makes use of these various situations to secure humor in this play.

The play is divided into two acts. Act i tells how the man who married the dumb wife finds a cure for her silence; act ii tells how the man who married a dumb wife finds a cure for her volubility. The play was written for a society of French students who were studying the works of Rabelais (rà'b'-lě'). Rabelais was a French author (1483-1553) who wrote stories of exaggerated satire

## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

and grotesque humor, picturing the vices and follies of people. Such exaggeration of broad humor prevailed in the plays of the Middle Ages. *The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife* is really a dramatization of a passage from one of the stories written by Rabelais, in which he tells of a good, honest husband who was earnestly desirous of having the tongue of his dumb wife loosened by any means in order that she might speak. By the aid of an industrious physician, an expert surgeon, and an obliging apothecary, the dumb wife was made to speak. However, she spoke "so loud, so much, so fiercely, and so long that her poor husband returned to the same physicians for a recipe to make her hold her peace." The physician replied that the only cure he knew for a talking wife was the husband's deafness. You see that the author of the play followed this plot of Rabelais's story exactly. Other authors had written the story, but Anatole France reshaped it into this perfect farce.

The play presents exaggerated characters more like buffoons and caricatures than like human beings. A good play must offer a variety of characters. A farce, especially, presents a rather large number of persons who appear in the most ridiculous situations. Note the sharp contrast of characters in this play; this exact oppositeness in their make-up furnishes a lively interest. The selfish, bookish husband married Catherine, even though she was dumb, because she was young and beautiful and rich. He regretted her dumbness chiefly because her affliction made her unable to cajole his clients into giving bounteous gifts to him. His seriousness is in direct contrast to her playfulness. Her youth makes her desire fun and activity; his age makes him wish to sit in his study. He is stingy;

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she is generous. He wishes quiet; she wishes to talk always. He is sour and surly; she is childish and happy. The apothecary, the surgeon, and the physician are minor characters whose purpose in the play seems to be to offer new and different funny people to amuse us. Master Sérafin Dulaurier, the obliging apothecary of few words and flattering manner; Master Jean Maugier, the pompous surgeon and barber with his enormous surgical instruments of the Middle Ages, his bellowing voice, his pretense of wisdom, and his flowery praise of doctors; Master Simon Colline, the wise doctor whose big words for tiny ailments make the people believe him capable of curing any affliction — these, together with the street criers, offer a most interesting gallery of human pictures.

The structure of the play is simple. Act i, scene i, creates the mediaeval tone, introduces us to one of the leading characters, talks about another in order that we shall anticipate her entrance later on, and explains the whole situation. The main incident which starts the action into swing is the determination of Léonard to cure his wife's silence. Remember that the chief thing to look forward to is the ridiculousness of situations. From this first absurd incident each one grows more and more ridiculous until the play ends with all characters dancing in a fit of madness. The situations are of chief interest.

### Questions and Topics for Study

#### *Act I, Scene I*

1. What effect do the street scene and the scene of the judge's house, both on the same stage, have upon the audience?

## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

2. Tell just how you would have each person act in this first scene.

3. Explain, "She will give plentiful proof of her gratitude."

4. How did Léonard win the judgeship?

5. Why is Master Adam so anxious to have the case of the orphan settled?

6. What is there humorous in the statement: "People need to be encouraged to make proper presents"?

7. Does the talking about Catherine without introducing her in this scene make you more or less eager to meet her in the next scene?

8. Point out good examples of humor in this scene.

9. How do you know from this first scene that the play is to be a farce?

10. Judging from the first scene, what conflict do you expect?

### *Scene II*

1. What facts given in scene i are used in this scene?

2. Scenes i and ii introduce you to all the chief characters. Describe each.

3. What is your first impression of Catherine?

4. Why does Léonard wish to cure Catherine of her dumbness?

5. Why does Catherine wish to be cured?

6. What does Catherine's dancing to the blind man's song show about her character?

7. At the close of scene ii, what are you eager to see?

8. Why are the street criers introduced into this scene?

9. How do you know that the setting dates back to the Middle Ages?

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### *Scene III*

1. What is the connection between scene i and scene ii?
2. One way to secure humor is through contrasts of character. Show how this device is used in this scene.
3. What character is humorous because of his seriousness?

### *Act II, Scene I*

1. Tell just how Léonard should act when replying to Master Adam.
2. What is there humorous in the treatment given to Catherine?
3. What are Catherine's first words when her tongue is loosened?
4. What new trait of her character do these words reveal?
5. What is the purpose of the dramatist in making this scene so short?

### *Scene II*

1. How does scene i of this act prepare you for this scene?
2. A dramatist reveals characters by what they say, by what they do, and by what others say about them. Point out instances in which the author describes Catherine to you by each of these devices.
3. What is the outstanding trait of Léonard's character?
4. What is the outstanding trait of Catherine's character?
5. What hint is given of the final effect of Catherine's chattering upon Léonard?



## Notes, Questions, and Topics for Study

6. How has the dramatist created suspense in this scene?
7. What is the most humorous situation in this scene? Explain.
8. What do you expect when Léonard calls Gilles?
9. What does the decree written and read by Léonard in this scene tell you about the state of his mind?
10. What does this lead you to expect?
11. Why is this hint a good ending for scene ii?

### *Scene III*

1. Upon what grounds does Mlle. de la Garandière "venture to hope for a favoring verdict"?
2. What has really aroused Léonard's interest in the case?
3. Why is the introduction of Master Adam's ward just at this point very effective? Think of all possible purposes the dramatist might have had in mind.
4. What is humorous about this situation?

### *Scene IV*

1. Has your impression of Léonard changed since the first act?
2. What conversations are most amusing? Prepare to read them to the class to bring out the humor.
3. What is the effect of having the physician unable to cure Catherine of dumbness?
4. What does this lead you to expect?
5. A good dramatist creates suspense. What devices are used in this scene to make the audience wait?
6. What is cophosis? What is there humorous in this word?

## Appendix

7. What are you led to anticipate at the close of this scene?

8. What is the most humorous situation in this scene?

### *Scene V*

1. Why does Catherine deliver the long speech at the beginning of this scene?

2. Whose situation is more unfortunate, Léonard's or Catherine's? Which is more ridiculous? Explain.

3. How would you have Léonard act when he says, "'Tis delicious. I can't hear a thing"?

4. How did Léonard's deafness affect Catherine?

5. At what point does the play reach the highest point of interest?

6. What effect does the repetition of the song of the blind man have at the end of the play?

7. What is the most humorous situation in this scene?

8. Can you suggest a more appropriate ending?

### *General Questions*

1. At what point does the introduction to the play end?

2. What is the main incident — the incident that starts the play into action?

3. At what point is the interest highest; that is, at what point does the play reach the climax?

4. What is the conflict in this play? Who wins? Are the struggles of chief importance? If not, what is the chief interest in the play?

5. How has the author secured humor in the play? Point out specific instances to illustrate.

6. How has the author created a mediaeval setting?

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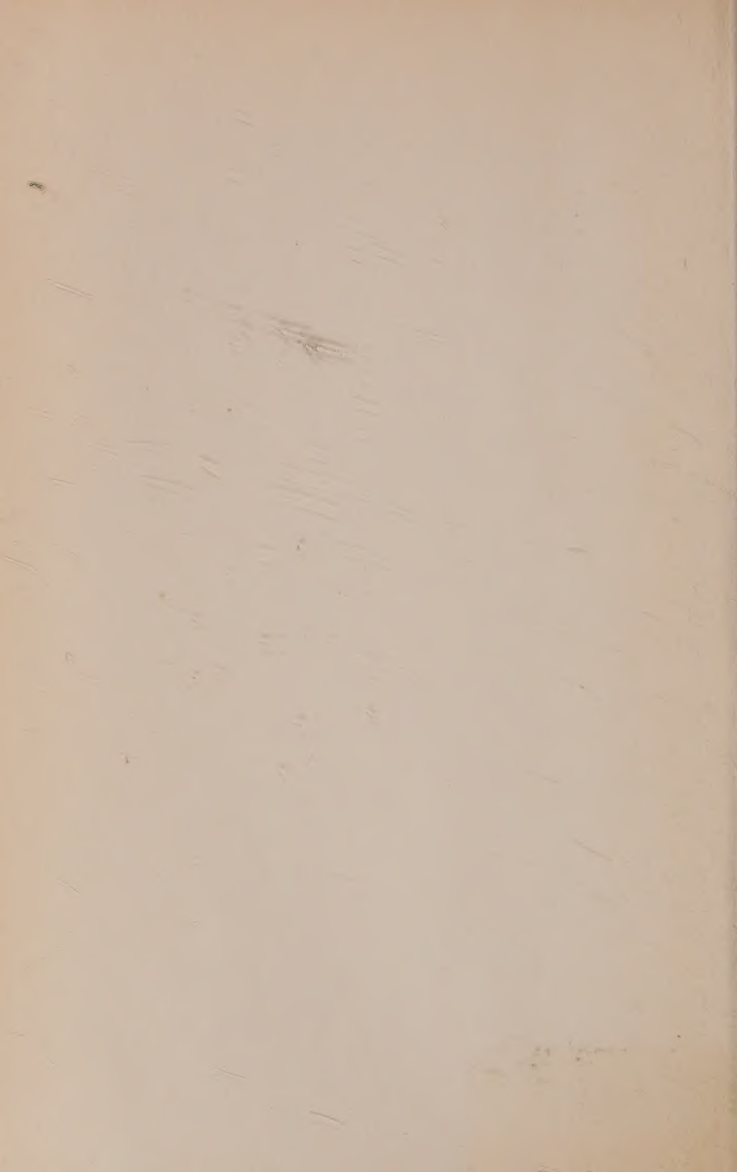
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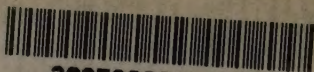




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